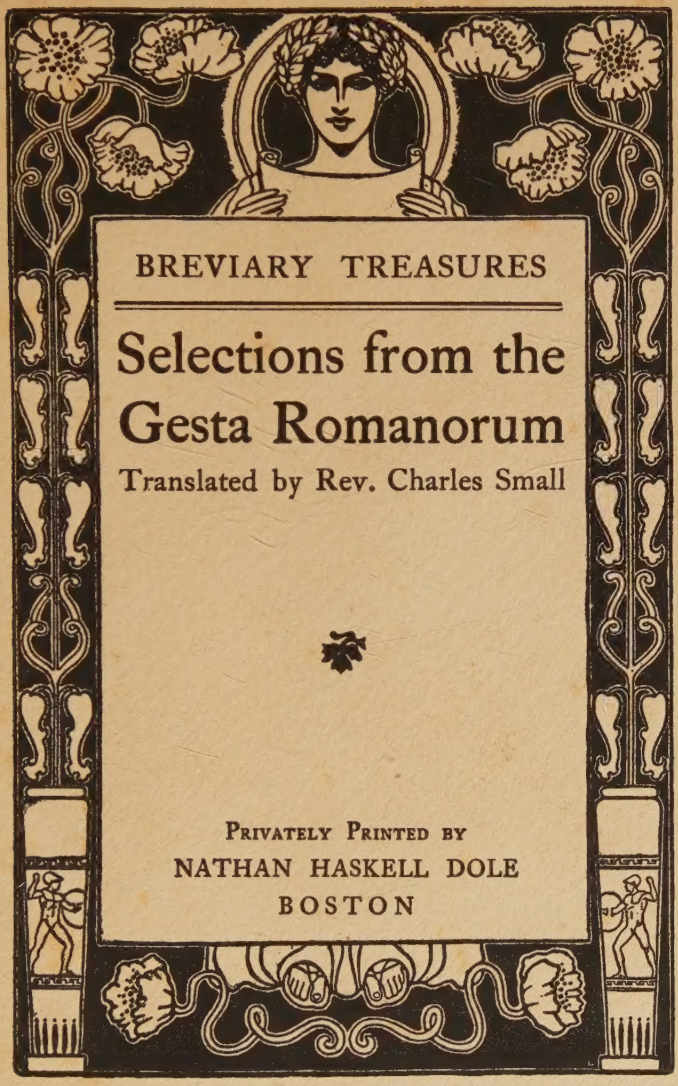
SELECTIONS FROM THE "GESTA ROMANORUM"



BREVIARY TREASURES

Selections from the Gesta Romanorum

Translated by Rev. Charles Small

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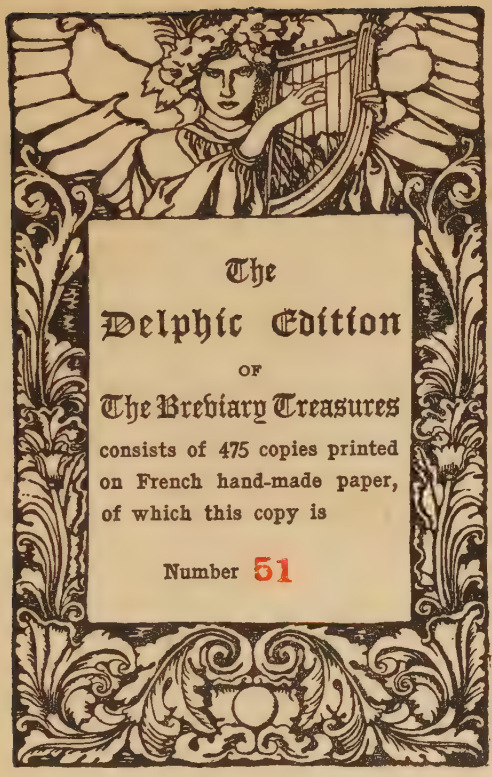

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INTRODUCTION

THE so-called Gesta Romanorum — the Gests or Acts of the Romans — consists of a collection of 181 stories, first printed in 1473. Their popularity in the Middle Ages is shown by the fact that numerous manuscripts, all varying in content and size, are found in various parts of Europe. Wynkyn de Worde, Caxton's apprentice, who flourished between 1491 and 1535, included among his four hundred printed books a small quarto, undated, which contained forty-three chapters or stories, translated into the quaint and stilted English of his day. There were other versions of the English manuscripts of not more than sixty chapters, but not until 1824 was any attempt made to give the complete work in modern style. The translation then

published in two volumes was by the Rev. Charles Swan, who prefixed a somewhat elaborate introduction, showing that a great deal of the "Romantic Fabling" of the Middle Ages was due to the Crusaders bringing back with them Oriental tales. The monks, desirous of impressing their illiterate hearers, employed stories of Eastern, classical, and legendary origin to illustrate their sermons. Characteristic of all the Gesta Romanorum is the often far-fetched and absurd "moralization" appended. There was no attempt to teach history or geography, or to avoid anachronisms. The perfect naïveté of the narration is delightful; marvels are included with all the solemnity of a mediæval Bestiary; countries and cities are jumbled together with an indeterminateness worthy of a candidate for a civil service position; royal titles are applied to the men of common clay, and the queerest standards of morals are inculcated.

Nevertheless, the stories are often of striking interest and vivacity. Who their original author or authors may have

been is wholly a matter of conjecture. But later writers have freely used this storehouse of suggestion for more carefully elaborated novels or more consistently dramatic works. Many of them were used by Shakespeare, and the inquisitive reader may like to compare the first and longest tale in the present selection with the tragedy of "Pericles, Prince of Tyre."

The chapters here printed are taken from the revised edition of Swan's translation. The morals are omitted.

GESTA ROMANORUM

I.

STORY OF APOLLONIUS, PRINCE OF TYRE

I.

ANTIOCHUS, the king of Antioch (from whom the city takes its name), had a daughter of such uncommon beauty, that when she came of marriageable years, she was sought after with the greatest

eagerness. But on whom to bestow her was a source of much anxiety to the king; and, from frequently contemplating the exquisite loveliness of her face, the delicacy of her form, and the excellence of her disposition, he began to love her with more than a father's love. He burned with an unhallowed flame, and would have excited a simultaneous feeling in his daughter.

She, however, courageously persevered in the path of duty, until at length violence accomplished what persuasion had in vain struggled to effect. Thus situated, she gave a loose to her tears, and wept in an agony of the bitterest sorrow. At this moment her nurse entered, and asked the occasion of her uneasiness; she replied, "Alas, my beloved nurse, two noble names have just perished."

"Dear lady," returned the other, "why do you say so?"

She told her.

"And what accursed demon has been busy?" asked the nurse.

"Where," replied the lady, "where is my father? I have no father; in me

that sacred name has perished. But death is a remedy for all, and I will die."

The nurse, alarmed at what she heard, soothed her into a less desperate mood, and engaged her word not to seek so fearful a relief.

In the mean time the impious parent, assuming the specious garb of hypocrisy, exhibited to the citizens the fair example of an honest life. In secret he exulted at the success of his iniquity, and reflected upon the best means of freeing his unhappy daughter from the numerous suitors who honourably desired her hand. To effect this, he devised a new scheme of wickedness. He proposed certain questions, and annexed to them a condition, by which whosoever furnished an appropriate answer should espouse the lady; but failing, should be instantly decapitated. A multitude of crowned heads from every quarter, attracted by her unmatchable beauty, presented themselves; but they were all put to death. For, if any one chanced to develop the horrid secret, he was slain equally with him who failed, in order to prevent its being

divulged. Then the head of the victim blackened upon the gate. The suitors, therefore, naturally grew less; for, perceiving so many ghastly countenances peering above them, their courage quailed, and they returned hastily to their several homes.

Now, all this was done that he who had produced this scene of wickedness might continue in uninterrupted possession. After a short time, the young prince of Tyre, named Apollonius, well-lettered and rich, sailing along the coast, disembarked and entered Antioch. Approaching the royal presence, he said,

"Hail, oh king! I seek thy daughter in marriage."

The king unwillingly heard him communicate his wishes, and fixing an earnest look upon the young man, said,

"Dost thou know the conditions?"

"I do," answered he boldly, "and find ample confirmation at your gates."

The king, enraged at his firmness, returned, "Hear, then, the question — 'I am transported with wickedness; I live upon my mother's flesh. I seek my

brother, and find him not in the offspring of my mother.' "

The youth received the question, and went from the presence of the king; and after duly considering the matter, by the good providence of God, discovered a solution. He immediately returned, and addressing the incestuous wretch, said,

"Thou hast proposed a question, oh king! attend my answer. Thou hast said, '*I am transported with wickedness*,' and thou hast not lied: look into thy heart. '*I live upon my mother's flesh*,' — look upon thy daughter."

The king, hearing this explication of the riddle, and fearing the discovery of his enormities, regarded him with a wrathful eye.

"Young man," said he, "thou art far from the truth, and deservest death; but I will yet allow thee the space of thirty days. Recollect thyself. In the mean while, return to thy own country: if thou findest a solution to the enigma, thou shalt marry my daughter: if not thou shalt die."

The youth, much disturbed, called his

company together, and hastening on board his own vessel, immediately set sail.

No sooner had he departed, than the king sent for his steward, whose name was Taliarchus, and spoke to him in this manner:

"Taliarchus, you are the most faithful repository of my secrets; you know, therefore, that the Prince Apollonius of Tyre has found out my riddle. Pursue him instantly to Tyre, and destroy him either with the sword or with poison. When you return, you shall receive a liberal recompense."

Taliarchus, arming himself, and providing a sum of money, sailed into the country of the young man.

II.

When Apollonius reached his own home, he opened his coffers, and searched a variety of books upon the subject in question, but he still adhered to the same idea.

"Unless I am much deceived," said he to himself, "King Antiochus entertains an impious love for his daughter." And continuing his reflections, he went on, "What art thou about, Apollonius? thou hast resolved his problem, and still he has not given thee his daughter. Therefore, God will not have thee die."

Commanding his ships to be got ready, and laden with a hundred thousand measures of corn, and a great weight of gold and silver, with many changes of garments, he hastily embarked during the night, in company with a few faithful followers. They put to sea immediately; and much wonder and regret arose the next day among the citizens respecting him. For he was greatly beloved amongst them; and such was their sorrow, that the barbers, for a length of time, lost all their occupation; public spectacles were forbidden; the baths were closed, and no one entered either the temples or tabernacles.

While these things were going on, Taliarchus, who had been despatched by Antiochus to destroy the prince, observing every house shut up, and the signs of mourning general, asked a boy the occasion of it.

"Sir," replied he, "are you ignorant of this matter, that you ask me? Understand, then, that Apollonius, prince of this country, having returned from a visit to King Antiochus, is nowhere to be found."

Much rejoiced at what he heard, Taliarchus returned to his vessel, and sailed back again to his own country. Presenting himself to the king, he exclaimed,

"Be happy, my lord; Apollonius, through dread of you, is not to be found anywhere."

"He has fled," returned the king; "but long he shall not escape me." And he immediately put forth an edict to this effect:

"Whosoever brings before me the traitor Apollonius shall receive fifty talents of gold; but whosoever presents me with his head shall be rewarded with a hundred."

This tempting proposal stimulated not only his enemies, but his pretended friends, to follow him, and many dedicated their time and activity to the pursuit. They traversed sea and land, near and remote countries, but he fortunately escaped their search. The malicious king fitted out a navy for the same purpose, and commanded them to proceed with the utmost diligence in their employment.

Apollonius, however, arrived safely at Tharsus, and walking along the shore, he was distinguished by a certain slave of his own household, called Elinatus, who happened that very hour to have reached it. Approaching, he made obeisance to the prince, and Apollonius, recognizing him, returned his salute as great men are wont to do; for he thought him contemptible.

The old man, indignant at his reception, again saluted him, "Hail, King Apollonius! Return my salute, and despise not poverty, if it be ornamented by honest deeds. Did you know what I know, you would be cautious."

"May it please you to tell me what you know?" answered the prince.

"You are proscribed," returned the other.

"And who shall dare proscribe a prince in his own land?"

"Antiochus has done it."

"Antiochus! For what cause?"

"Because you sought to be what the father of his daughter is."

"And what is the price of my proscription?"

"He who shall take you alive is to receive fifty talents of gold; but for your head he will have a hundred. And therefore I caution you to be upon your guard."

Saying this, Elinatus went his way. Apollonius recalled him, and proffered the hundred talents of gold which had been set upon his head.

"Take," said he, "so much of my poverty; thou hast merited it: cut off my head, and gratify the malicious king. You possess the sum, and still you are innocent. I engage you, therefore, of my own free will, to do so great a pleasure to him who seeks my destruction."

"My lord," answered the old man, "far be it from me to take away your life for hire; the friendship of good men is of more value, and cannot be bought."

Then, returning thanks to the prince for his munificence, he departed. But as Apollonius tarried on the shore, he perceived a person named Stranguilio

approaching him with a sorrowful aspect, and every now and then uttering a deep lament.

"Hail, Stranguilio!" said the prince.

"Hail, my lord the king!" was his reply. "You appear concerned; tell me what occasions it?"

"To say truth," returned Apollonius, "it is because I have required the daughter of a king in marriage. Can I conceal myself in your country?"

"My lord," answered Stranguilio, "our city is extremely poor, and cannot sustain your attendants, in consequence of a grievous famine which has wasted the land. Our citizens are hopeless and helpless; and death, with all its accompanying horrors, is before our eyes."

"Give thanks to God," replied Apollonius, "who hath driven me a fugitive to your shores. If you will conceal my flight, I will present to you a hundred thousand measures of corn."

Full of joy, Stranguilio prostrated himself at the feet of the prince, and exclaimed,

"My lord, if you will assist our

starving city we will not only conceal your flight, but, if necessary, unsheath our swords in your defence."

Apollonius, therefore, hastened into the forum, and ascending the tribunal, spoke thus to the assembled population: "Men of Tharsus, understanding that an afflicting dearth of provisions troubles you, I, Apollonius, proffer aid. I believe that you will not forget the benefit I render you, but conceal my flight from those who unjustly pursue me. Ye know what the malice of Antiochus aims at, and by what providence I am brought hither to relieve you in this terrible emergency. I present to you a hundred thousand measures of corn at the price I gave for it in my own country — that is, at eight pieces for each measure."

The citizens, delighted at what they heard, gave thanks to God, and immediately prepared the corn for use.

But Apollonius, not forgetting the dignity of a king in the traffic of a merchant, returned the purchase-money to the state; and the people, struck with wonder at this unexpected instance of

generosity, erected in the forum a chariot drawn by four horses, running side by side. In the car was a statue, representing Apollonius with his right hand rubbing the corn from the ear. His left foot trampled upon it; and on the pediment they placed the following inscription: —

"APOLLONIUS, PRINCE OF TYRE, BY A GIFT TO THE CITY OF THARSUS, PRESERVED ITS INHABITANTS FROM A CRUEL DEATH."

III.

A FEW days afterwards, by the advice of Stranguilio and his wife Dionysias, the prince determined to sail for Pentapolis, a city of the Tyrrheni, where he might remain in greater tranquillity and opulence. They brought him, therefore, with much ceremony to the sea-shore; and then bidding his hosts farewell, he embarked.

For three days and nights he sailed

with favourable winds; but after losing sight of the Tharsian coast, they veered round, and blew from the north with great violence. The rain fell in heavy showers, mixed with hail; and the ship was carried away by the fury of the storm. Dark clouds brooded over them; and the blast, still increasing, threatened them with immediate death. The crew, imagining all was lost, caught hold of planks, and committed themselves to the mercy of the waves. In the extreme darkness that followed, all perished. But Apollonius, riding on a plank, was cast upon the Pentapolitan shore; on which, after quitting the water, he stood thoughtfully, and fixing his eyes upon the ocean, now in a calm, exclaimed,

"Oh, ye faithless waves! better had I fallen into the hands of that savage king!—to whom shall I now go? What country shall I seek? Who will afford succour to an unknown and helpless stranger?"

As he spoke this, he beheld a young man coming towards him. He was a robust, hard-favoured fisherman, clad in

a coarse frock. Apollonius, driven by his distresses, humbly besought this man's assistance, even with tears starting from his eyes.

"Pity me," said he, "whosoever thou art; pity a man stripped of all by shipwreck — one to whom better days have been familiar, and who is descended from no ignoble family. But that you may know whom you succour, understand that I am a prince of Tyre, and that my name is Apollonius. Save, then, my life, I entreat you."

The fisherman, compassionating his sufferings, brought him to his own roof, and placed such as he had before him. And that there might be no deficiency in the charitable part he was acting, he divided his cloak, and gave one-half to the stranger.

"Take," said the benevolent man, "take what I can give, and go into the city; there, perhaps, you will find one with more power to serve you than I am. If you are unsuccessful in your search, return hither to me. What poverty can provide you shall share.

Yet, should you hereafter be restored to your throne, do not forget or despise the coarse, threadbare cloak of the poor fisherman."

"Fear not," said Apollonius; "should I prove ungrateful may I be shipwrecked again, nor find in my extremity a man like yourself."

As he spoke, the fisherman pointed out the way to the city gates, which Apollonius shortly entered.

Whilst he reflected upon the path he should pursue, he beheld a naked boy running along the street, having his head anointed with oil, and bound with a napkin. The youth lustily vociferated,

"Hear, hear, pilgrims or slaves; whosoever would be washed, let him haste to the gymnasium."

Apollonius, according to the proclamation, entered the bath, and pulling off his cloak, made use of the water. Whilst he was doing this, he cast his eyes around to discover some one of an equality with himself; and at last Altistrates, king of all that country, entered with a troop of his attendants. The king played with

them at tennis; and Apollonius running forward, caught up the ball, and striking it with inconceivable skill and rapidity, returned it to the royal player. The king, motioning to his servants, said,

"Give up your sport, give up your sport; for I suspect this youth is as good a player as I am."

Apollonius, flattered by this praise, approached the king, and catching up an unguent, with a dexterous hand anointed the king's body. Then, having gratefully administered a bath, he departed. After he was gone, "I swear to you," said his majesty to his surrounding friends, "that I have never bathed so agreeably as I have done to-day by the kindness of a youth whom I do not know. Go," added he, to one of the attendants, "go, and inquire who he is."

He followed accordingly, and beheld him equipped in the mean cloak received from the fisherman. Returning to the king, he said, "The youth is one who has suffered shipwreck."

"How do you know?" replied he.

"The man said nothing," answered

the servant, "but his dress pointed out his circumstances."

"Go quickly," returned the king, "and say that I entreat him to sup with me."

Apollonius was content, and accompanied the servant back. The latter, approaching the sovereign, stated the return of the shipwrecked person, but that, ashamed of his mean habit, he was unwilling to enter. The king instantly gave command that he should be clothed in honourable apparel, and introduced to the supper-room.

Apollonius therefore entered the royal drawing-room, and was placed opposite to the king. Dinner was brought, and then supper. He feasted not, however, with the feasters, but continually cast his eye upon the gold and silver ornaments of the table, and wept. One of the guests observing this, said to the king,

"He envies your regal magnificence, unless I am much deceived."

"You suspect unhappily," answered he; "he does not envy me, but laments somewhat that he has lost."

Then, turning to Apollonius, with a smiling countenance he said, "Young man, feast with us to-day, and hope that God has better things in store for you."

As he thus endeavoured to raise the drooping spirits of the youth, his daughter, a beautiful girl, entered, and first kissed her father, and then those who were his guests. When she had gone through this ceremony, she returned to the king, and said,

"My dear father, who is that young man reclining opposite to you in the place of honour, and whose grief appears so excessive?"

"Sweet daughter," answered he, "that is a shipwrecked youth, who pleased me to-day in the gymnasium; therefore I invited him to supper; but who he is I know not. If you wish to ascertain this, ask him — it becomes you to know all things; and perhaps, when you are made acquainted with his sorrows, you may compassionate and relieve them."

The girl, happy in the permission, approached the young man, and said,

"Good friend, kindness proves nobility: if it be not troublesome, tell me your name and fortunes."

"Would you inquire my name?" replied he: "I lost it in the sea; or my nobility? I left it in Tyre."

"Speak intelligibly," said the girl; and Apollonius then related his name and adventures. When he had made an end he wept, and the king, perceiving his tears, said to his daughter,

"My dear child, you did ill to inquire the name and occurrences of the young man's life. You have renewed his past griefs. But since he has revealed the truth, it is right that you should show the liberty you enjoy as queen."

The lady complied with the wishes of her father, and looking upon the youth, exclaimed, "You are our knight, Apollonius! Put away your afflictions, and my father will make you rich."

Apollonius thanked her with modesty and lamentation. Then said the king, "Bring hither your lyre, and add song to the banquet." She commanded the instrument to be brought, and began to

touch it with infinite sweetness. Applause followed the performance.

"There never was," said the courtiers, "a better or a sweeter song." Apollonius alone was silent, and his want of politeness drew from the king a remark.

"You do an unhandsome thing. Everybody else extols my daughter's musical skill; why then do you only discommend it?"

"Most gracious king," replied he, "permit me to say what I think. Your daughter comes near to musical preëminence, but has not yet attained it. Command, therefore, a lyre to be given me, and you shall then know what you are now ignorant of."

"I perceive," observed the king, "that you are universally learned," and directed a lyre to be presented to him. Apollonius retired for a few moments, and decorated his head; then, reëntering the dining-room, he took the instrument, and struck it so gracefully and delightfully that they unanimously agreed that it was the harmony not of Apollonius, but of Apollo.

The guests positively asserted that they never heard or saw anything better; and the daughter, regarding the youth with fixed attention, grew suddenly and violently enamoured.

"Oh, my father," cried she, "let me reward him as I think fit."

The king assented; and she, looking tenderly upon the youth, said,

"Sir Apollonius, receive out of my royal father's munificence two hundred talents of gold and four hundred pounds of silver, a rich garment, twenty men-servants, and ten handmaids;" then, turning to the attendants present, she continued, "Bring what I have promised." Her commands were obeyed; and the guests then rising, received permission to depart.

When they were gone, Apollonius also arose, and said,

"Excellent king, pitier of the distressed! and you, O queen, lover of study and friend of philosophy, fare ye well." Then addressing the servants bestowed upon him, he commanded them to bear away the presents he had re-

ceived to an hostelry; but the girl, who became apprehensive of losing her lover, looked sorrowfully at her parent, and said,

"Best king and father, does it please you that Apollonius, whom we have so lately enriched, should leave us? The goods we have given him will be purloined by wicked men."

The king admitted this, and assigned him apartments in the palace, where he lived in great honour.

But the lady's affection so much increased, that it deprived her of all rest; and in the morning she hastened to the bedside of her father. Surprised at the early visit, he inquired what had roused her at so unusual an hour.

"I have been unable to sleep," answered the lady; "and I wish you to permit me to receive instructions in music from the young stranger."

The king, pleased with his daughter's zeal for improvement, cheerfully assented, and commanded the youth to be brought into his presence.

"Apollonius," said he, "my daughter

is extremely desirous of learning your science; if you will instruct her, I will reward you abundantly."

"My lord," he answered, "I am ready to comply with your wishes;" and, accordingly, the girl was placed under his tuition. But her love preyed upon her health, and she visibly declined. Physicians were called in, and they had recourse to the usual expedients; but the diagnostics led them to no certain conclusion.

IV.

In a few days three young noblemen, who had long desired to espouse the lady, presented themselves before the king, and besought his favour.

"You have often promised us," said they, "that one or the other should marry your daughter. We are rich, and of noble lineage: choose, then, which of us shall be your son-in-law."

"You come," replied the king, "at an unseasonable time. My daughter is unable to follow her usual pursuits, and

for this reason languishes on her bed. But that I may not appear to you unnecessarily to protract your uncertainty, write each of you your names, and the settlement you will make her. She shall examine them, and choose between ye."

The suitors complied, and gave the writings to the king, who read, and sealed, and then despatched Apollonius with them to the lady. As soon as she beheld him whom she loved, she exclaimed,

"Sir, how is it that you enter my chamber alone?"

He presented the writings which her father had sent, and, having opened them, she read the names and proposals of the three suitors. Casting them aside, she said to Apollonius,

"Sir, are you not sorry that I must be married?"

"No," returned he; "whatever is for your honour is pleasant to me."

"Ah! master, master," continued the girl; "but if you loved me, you would grieve."

She wrote back her answer, sealed, and delivered it to Apollonius to carry to the king. It ran in these words:

"Royal sir and father, since you have permitted me to write my wishes, I do write them. I will espouse him who was shipwrecked."

The king read, but not knowing which of them had been in this predicament, he said to the contending parties, "Which of you has been shipwrecked?"

One, whose name was Ardonius, replied, "I have, my lord."

"What!" cried another, "diseases confound thee; mayst thou be neither safe nor sound. I know perfectly well that thou hast never been beyond the gates of the city; where, then, wert thou shipwrecked?"

When the king could not discover the shipwrecked suitor, he turned to Apollonius, and said,

"Take thou the tablets and read; perhaps they will be more intelligible to you than they are to me."

He took them, and running his eye

over the contents, perceived that he was the person designed, and that the lady loved him. He blushed.

"Dost thou discover this shipwrecked person, Apollonius?" asked the king. He blushed still deeper, and made a brief reply.

When the king became aware of his daughter's inclination, he said to the three lovers,

"In due time I will communicate with you." They bade him farewell and departed. But the king hastened to his daughter.

"Whom," said he, "wouldst thou choose for thy husband?"

She prostrated herself before him with tears, and answered,

"Dear father, I desire to marry the shipwrecked Apollonius."

His child's tears softened the parent's heart; he raised her up, and said,

"My sweet child, think only of thy happiness; since he is thy choice, he shall be mine. I will appoint the day of your nuptials immediately."

The following morning, he sent mes-

sengers to the neighbouring cities to invite the nobles. When they arrived, he said,

"My lords, my daughter would marry her master. I desire you, therefore, to be merry, for my child will be united to a wise man."

Saying this, he fixed the period of their spousals.

Now, it happened, after she became pregnant, that she walked with her husband, prince Apollonius, by the sea-shore, and a fine ship riding at anchor in the distance, the latter perceived that it was of his own country. Turning to the master of the vessel, he said, "Whence are you?"

"From Tyre," replied the man.

"You speak of my own land, my friend."

"Indeed! and are you a Tyrian?"

"As you have said."

"Do you know," continued the master, "a prince of that country, called Apollonius? I seek him; and whenever you happen to see him, bid him exult. King Antiochus and his daugh-

ter, at the very same instant, were blasted with lightning. The kingdom has fallen to Apollonius."

Full of pleasure at the unexpected intelligence he had received, the prince said to his wife, "Will you acquiesce in my setting out to obtain the throne?"

The lady instantly burst into tears: "Oh, my lord," said she, "the journey is long, and yet you would leave me! If, however, it is necessary that you should go, we will go together."

Instantly hastening to her father, she communicated the happy news which had just been heard, that Antiochus and his daughter, by the just judgment of an offended God, had been struck with lightning, and his wealth and diadem reserved for her husband. And lastly, she entreated his permission to accompany him. The old king, much exhilarated with the intelligence, was easily prevailed upon to assent; and ships were accordingly prepared for their conveyance. They were laden with everything necessary for the voyage; and a nurse, called Ligoridis, was embarked, and a

midwife, in anticipation of the young queen's parturition. Her father accompanied them to the shore, and with an affectionate kiss of each, took his leave.

V.

When they had been at sea some days, there arose a fearful tempest; and the lady, brought by this circumstance into premature labour, to all appearance perished. The moaning and tears of her family almost equalled the storm; and Apollonius, alarmed at the outcry, ran into the apartment, and beheld his

lovely wife like an inhabitant of the grave. He tore his garments from his breast, and cast himself with tears and groans upon her inanimate body.

"Dear wife!" he exclaimed, "daughter of the great Altistrates, how shall I console thy unhappy parent?"

Here the pilot, interrupting him, observed, "Sir, it will prejudice the ship to retain the dead body on board; command that it be cast into the sea."

"Wretch that you are," returned Apollonius, "would you wish me to hurl this form into the waves, that succoured me shipwrecked and in poverty?"

Then calling his attendants, he directed them to prepare a coffin, and smear the lid with bitumen. He also commanded that a leaden scroll should be placed in it, and the body, arrayed in regal habiliments, and crowned, was then deposited in the coffin. He kissed her cold lips, and wept bitterly. Afterwards giving strict charge respecting the newborn infant, he committed all that remained of his wife to the sea.

On the third day the chest was driven

by the waves to the shores of Ephesus, not far from the residence of a physician, called Cerimon, who happened at that hour to be walking with certain of his pupils upon the sands. Observing the chest deserted by the waters, he commanded his servants to secure it with all speed, and convey it to his house: this done, he opened it, and discovered a beautiful girl, attired in royal apparel. Her uncommon loveliness struck all the spectators with astonishment; for she was as a sunbeam of beauty, in which nature had created everything pure and perfect, and failed in nothing but in denying her the attribute of immortality.

Her hair glittered like the snow, beneath which a brow of milky whiteness, smooth and unwrinkled as a plain, peacefully rested. Her eyes resembled the changeableness, not the prodigality, of two luminous orbs; for their gaze was directed by an unshaken modesty, which indicated a constant and enduring mind. Her eyebrows were naturally and excellently placed; and her shapely nose, describing a straight line, rose centrically

upon the face. It possessed neither too much length nor too little. Her neck was whiter than the solar rays, and ornamented with precious stones; while her countenance, full of unspeakable joy, communicated happiness to all who looked on her. She was exquisitely formed; and the most critical investigation could not discover more or less than there ought to be. Her beautiful arms, like the branches of some fair tree, descended from her well-turned breast: to which, delicately chiselled fingers, not outshone by the lightning, were attached. In short, she was outwardly a perfect model, — flashing through which, the divine spark of soul her Creator had implanted might be gloriously distinguished. Works of power ought to accord with one another: and hence all corporal beauty originates in the soul's loveliness. It has even been said, that mental excellence, however various, adapts the mass of matter to itself.

Be this as it may, the most perfect adaptation of soul and body existed in this lady, now discovered by Cerimon.

"Fair girl," said he, "how camest thou so utterly forsaken?" The money, which had been placed beneath her head, now attracted his attention, and then the scroll of lead presented itself.

"Let us examine what it contains."

He opened it accordingly, and read as follows:

"Whomsoever thou art that findest this chest, I entreat thy acceptance of ten pieces of gold; the other ten expend, I pray thee, on a funeral. For the corse it shrouds hath left tears and sorrows enough to the authors of her being. If thou dost neglect my request, I imprecate upon thee curses against the day of judgment, and devote thy body to death, unhonoured and uninhumed."

When the physician had read, he directed his servants to comply with the mourner's injunction. "And I solemnly vow," added he, "to expend more than his sorrow requires." Immediately he bade them prepare a funeral pile. When this was done, and everything laid in order, a pupil of the physician, a young man, but possessing the wisdom of old

age, came to look upon the lady. As he considered her fair form attentively, already laid upon the pile, his preceptor said to him,

"You come opportunely; I have expected you this hour. Get a vial of precious ointment, and, in honour of this bright creature, pour it upon the funeral pile."

The youth obeyed, approached the body, and drawing the garments from her breast, poured out the ointment. But accidentally passing his hand over her heart, he fancied that it beat. The youth was electrified. He touched the veins, and searched if any breath issued from the nostrils. He pressed his lips to hers; and he thought he felt life struggling with death. Calling hastily to the servants, he bade them place torches at each corner of the bier. When they had done this, the blood, which had been coagulated, presently liquefied; and the young man, attentive to the change, exclaimed to his master,

"She lives! she lives! You scarcely credit me; come and see."

As he spoke, he bore the lady to his own chamber. Then heating oil upon his breast, he steeped in it a piece of wool, and laid it upon her body. By these means, the congealed blood being dissolved, the spirit again penetrated to the marrows. Thus, the veins being cleared, her eyes opened, and respiration returned.

"What are you?" said she. "Touch me not otherwise than I ought to be touched; for I am the daughter and the wife of a king."

Full of rapture at the sound of her voice, the young man hurried into his master's room, and related what had occurred.

"I approve your skill," returned he, "I magnify your art, and wonder at your prudence. Mark the results of learning, and be not ungrateful to science. Receive now thy reward; for the lady brought much wealth with her."

Cerimon then directed food and clothes to be conveyed to her, and administered the best restoratives. A few days after her recovery, she declared her

birth and misfortunes; and the good physician, commiserating her situation, adopted her as his daughter. With tears she solicited permission to reside among the vestals of Diana; and he placed her with certain female attendants in the magnificent temple of the goddess.

VI.

In the mean while Apollonius, guided by the good providence of God, arrived at Tharsus, and disembarking, sought the mansion of Stranguilio and Dionysias. After mutual greetings, he narrated his adventures.

"Wretched as I am in the death of a beloved wife, I have yet cause for joy in

the existence of this infant. To you I will intrust her; for never, since his offspring has perished, will I again revisit the old Altistrates. But educate my girl with your own daughter Philomatia; and call her after your city, by the name of Tharsia. I would, moreover, pray you to take charge of her nurse, Ligoridis."

With such words, he gave the child up to them, accompanied by large presents of gold and silver, and valuable raiment. He then took an oath that he would neither cut his beard, or hair, or nails, until his daughter were bestowed in marriage. Grieving at the rashness of the vow, Stranguilio took the infant, and promised to educate it with the utmost care; and Apollonius, satisfied with the assurance, went on board his vessel, and sailed to other countries.

While these things were transacting, Tharsia attained her fifth year, and commenced a course of liberal studies with the young Philomatia, her companion. When she was fourteen, returning from school, she found her nurse, Ligoridis,

taken with a sudden indisposition, and seating herself near the old woman, kindly inquired the cause.

"My dear daughter," replied she, "hear my words, and treasure them in your heart. Whom do you believe to be your father and mother; and which is your native country?"

"Tharsus," returned she, "is the place of my nativity; my father, Stranguilio, and my mother, Dionysias."

The nurse groaned, and said,

"My daughter, listen to me; I will tell you to whom you owe your birth, in order that, when I am dead, you may have some guide for your future actions. Your father is called Apollonius; and your mother's name is Lucina, the daughter of King Altistrates. She died the moment you were born; and Apollonius, adorning her with regal vesture, cast the chest which contained her into the sea. Twenty sestertia of gold were placed beneath her head, and whosoever discovered it was entreated to give her burial. The ship in which your unhappy father sailed, tossed to and fro by

the winds which formed your cradle, at last put into this port, where we were hospitably received by Stranguilio and Dionysias, to whom your sire also recommended me. He then made a vow never to clip his beard, or hair, or nails, until you were married. Now, I advise that if, after my death, your present friends would do you an injury, hasten into the forum, and there you will find a statue of your father. Cling to it, and state yourself the daughter of him whose statue that is. The citizens, mindful of the benefits received from him, will avenge your wrong."

"My dear nurse," answered Tharsia, "you tell me strange things, of which, till now, I was ignorant."

After some future discourse, Ligoridis gave up the ghost. Tharsia attended her obsequies, and lamented her a full year.

After this, she returned to her studies in the schools. Her custom was, on returning, never to eat until she had been to the monument erected in honour of her nurse. She carried with

her a flask of wine, and there tarried, invoking the name of her beloved and lamented parents. Whilst she was thus employed, Dionysias, with her daughter Philomatia, passed through the forum; and the citizens, who had caught a glimpse of Tharsia's form, exclaimed,

"Happy father of the lovely Tharsia; but as for her companion, she is a shame and a disgrace."

The mother, hearing her daughter vilified, while the stranger was commended, turned away in a madness of fury. She retired to solitary communication with herself.

"For fourteen years," muttered she, "the father has neglected his daughter; he has sent no letters, and certainly he is dead. The nurse is also dead, and there is no one to oppose me. I will kill her, and deck my own girl with her ornaments."

As she thus thought, her steward, named Theophilus, entered. She called him, and promising a vast reward, desired him to put Tharsia to death.

"What has the maid done?" asked he.

"She has done the very worst things; you ought not therefore to deny me. Do what I command you; if you do it not, you will bring evil on yourself."

"Tell me, lady, how is it to be done?"

"Her custom is," replied Dionysias, "on coming from the schools, not to take food until she has entered her nurse's monument; arm yourself with a dagger, seize her by the hair of the head, and there stab her. Then throw her body into the sea, and come to me; I will give you your liberty, with a large reward.

The steward, taking the weapon, went with much sorrow to the monument.

"Alas!" said he, "shall I not deserve liberty except by the sacrifice of a virgin's life?"

He entered the monument, where Tharsia, after her occupation in the schools, had as usual retired; the flask of wine was in her hand. The steward attacked the poor girl, and, seizing her by the hair, threw her upon the ground. But as he was on the point of striking, Tharsia cried out,

"Oh, Theophilus! what crime have I committed against you, or against any other, that I should die?"

"You are innocent," answered he, "of everything, save possessing a sum of money and certain royal ornaments left you by your father."

"Oh, sir!" said the forsaken orphan, "if I have no hope, yet suffer me to supplicate my Maker before I die."

"Do so," answered the steward, "and God knows that it is upon compulsion that I slay thee."

VII.

Now, while the girl was engaged in prayer, certain pirates rushed into the monument, expecting to carry off a booty; and observing a young maid prostrated, and a man standing over her in the act to destroy her, they shouted out,

"Stop, barbarian! that is our prey, not your victory."

Theophilus, full of terror, fled hastily

from the monument and hid himself by the shore.

The pirates carried off the maid to sea; and the steward, returning to his mistress, assured her that he had obeyed her commands.

"I advise you," said he, "to put on a mourning garment, which I also will do, and shed tears for her death. This will deceive the citizens, to whom we will say that she was taken off by a sickness."

When Stranguilio heard what had been done, his grief was sincere and violent.

"I will clothe myself in deep mourning," cried he, "for I too am involved in this fearful enormity. Alas! what can I do? Her father freed our city from a lingering death. Through our means he suffered shipwreck; he lost his property, and underwent the extreme of poverty. Yet we return him evil for good! He intrusted his daughter to our care, and a savage lioness hath devoured her! Blind wretch that I was! Innocent, I grieve. I am bound to a base and venomous serpent." Lifting up his eyes to heaven, he continued, "O God, thou

knowest that I am free from the blood of this girl — require her of Dionysias."

Then fixing a stern look upon his wife, "Enemy of God, and disgrace of man, thou hast destroyed the daughter of a king."

Dionysias made much apparent lamentation: she put her household into mourning, and wept bitterly before the citizens.

"My good friends," said she, "the hope of our eyes, the beloved Tharsia, is gone — she is dead. Our tears shall bedew the marble which we have raised to her memory."

The people then hastened to the place where her form, moulded in brass, had been erected, in gratitude for the benefits conferred upon that city by her father.

The pirates transported the maid to Machilenta, where she was placed among other slaves for sale. A most wretched and debauched pimp, hearing of her perfections, endeavoured to buy her. But Athanagoras, prince of that city, observing her lofty port, her beautiful countenance, and wise conduct, offered ten golden sestertia.

Pimp. I will give twenty.

Athanagoras. And I, thirty.

Pimp. Forty.

Athanagoras. Fifty.

Pimp. Eighty.

Athanagoras. Ninety.

Pimp. I will give a hundred sestertia in ready money; if any one offer more, I will give ten gold sestertia above.

"Why should I contend any farther with this pimp," thought Athanagoras. "I may purchase a dozen for the price she will cost him. Let him have her; and by and by I will enter covertly his dwelling and solicit her love."

Tharsia was conducted by the pimp to a house of ill fame, in an apartment of which there was a golden Priapus, richly ornamented with gems.

"Girl! worship that image," said the wretch.

Tharsia. I may not worship any such thing. Oh, my lord! are you not a Lapsatenarian.

Pimp. Why?

Tharsia. Because the Lapsateni worship Priapus.

Pimp. Know you not, wretched girl, that you have entered the house of a greedy pimp?

Casting herself at his feet, she exclaimed, "Oh, sir! do not dishonour me; be not guilty of such a flagrant outrage."

Pimp. Are you ignorant that, with a pimp and the torturer, neither prayers nor tears are available?

He sent for the overseer of the women, and desired him to array Tharsia in the most splendid apparel, and proclaim around the city the price of her dishonour. The overseer did as he was ordered; and on the third day a crowd of people arrived, preceded by the pimp with music. But Athanagoras came first in a mask, and Tharsia, looking despairingly upon him, threw herself at his feet.

"Pity me, my lord; pity me, for the love of Heaven. By that Heaven I adjure you to save me from dishonour. Hear my story; and knowing from whom I sprung, respect my descent and defend my innocence."

She then detailed the whole fortunes of her life; and Athanagoras, confused and penitent, exclaimed,

"Alas! and I too have a daughter, whom fate may in like manner afflict. In your misfortunes I may apprehend hers. Here are twenty gold pieces; it is more than your barbarous master exacts from you. Relate your narrative to the next comers, and it will insure your freedom."

Full of gratitude for the generous treatment she experienced, Tharsia returned him thanks, but entreated that her story might not be communicated to others.

"To none but my own daughter," said he, "for it will be replete with moral advantage."

So saying, and shedding some tears over her fallen estate, he departed. As he went out he met a friend, who stopped him and asked how the girl had behaved.

"None better," returned the prince; "but she is very sorrowful."

The youth entered, and she closed the door as on the former occasion.

"How much has the prince given you?" asked he.

"Forty pieces," answered the girl.

"Here, then; take the whole pound of gold."

Tharsia took the present, but falling at his feet, explained her situation. Aporiatus (for that was the young man's name) answered,

"Rise, lady; we are men. All of us are subject to misfortunes."

He went out, and observing Athanagoras laughing, said to him,

"You are a fine fellow! Have you nobody to pledge in tears but me?"

Afraid that these words should betray the matter, they gave another turn to the discourse, and awaited the coming of some other person. Great numbers appeared, but they all returned in tears, having given her sums of money. Tharsia having obtained the sum which the pimp had fixed as the price of her dishonour, presented it to him.

"Take care," said the monster, "that you bring me whatever money is presented to you."

But the next day, understanding that she yet preserved her honour, his rage knew no bounds; and he immediately commissioned the overseer of the women to complete the iniquity. When he appeared, the poor girl's tears flowed in profusion.

"Pity me, sir," she said, falling at his feet; "my misfortunes have created the compassion of others, and surely you will not alone spurn my request. I am the daughter of a king; do not dishonour me."

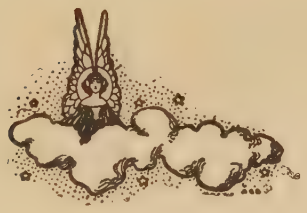
"This pimp," replied he, "is avaricious: I know not what I can do."

"Sir," answered Tharsia, "I have been educated in liberal pursuits. I understand music; if, therefore, you will lead me to the forum, you shall hear my performance. Propose questions to the people, and I will expound them; I have no doubt but I shall receive money enough."

"Well," said the fellow, "I will do as you would have me."

Proclamation being made, the people crowded to the forum; and her eloquence

and beauty impressed them all. Whatever question they proposed, she lucidly answered; and by these means drew much wealth from the curious citizens. Athanagoras, also, watched over her with much anxiety — with little less, indeed, than he showed to his only child. He recommended her to the care of the overseer, and bought him to his interest by valuable presents.



VIII.

LET us now return to Apollonius. After a lapse of fourteen years, he again made his appearance at the house of Stranguilio and Dionysias, in the city of Tharsus: no sooner had the former beheld him, than he strode about like a madman.

"Woman," said he, addressing his wife, "what wilt thou do now? Thou hast said that Apollonius was shipwrecked and dead. Behold, he seeks his daughter; what answer shall we make?"

"Foolish man," returned she, "let us

resume our mourning, and have recourse to tears. He will believe that his child died a natural death."

As she said this, Apollonius entered. Observing their funeral habiliments, he asked,

"Do you grieve at my return? Those tears, I fear, are not for yourselves, but for me."

"Alas!" replied the woman, "I would to Heaven that another, and not me or my husband, had to detail to you what I must say. Your daughter Tharsia is suddenly dead!"

Apollonius trembled through every limb, and then stood fixed as a statue.

"Oh, woman, if my daughter be really as you describe, have her money and clothes also perished?"

"Some part of both," replied Dionysias, "is of course expended; but that you may not hesitate to give faith to our assurances, we will produce testimony in our behalf. The citizens, mindful of your munificence, have raised a brazen monument to her memory, which your own eyes may see."

Apollonius, thus imposed upon, said to his servants, "Go ye to the ship; I will visit the grave of my unhappy child."

There he read the inscription, as we have detailed above, and then, as if imprecating a curse upon his own eyes, he exclaimed in a paroxysm of mental agony,

"Hateful, cruel sources of perception, do ye now refuse tears to the memory of my lamented girl."

With expressions like these, he hastened to his ship, and entreated his servants to cast him into the sea.

They set sail for Tyre, and for a time the breezes blew prosperously; but changing, they were driven considerably out of their course. Guided by the good providence of God, they entered the port of Machilena, where his daughter still abode. The pilot and the rest of the crew shouted loudly on their approach to land, and Apollonius sent to inquire the cause.

"My lord," answered the pilot, "the people of Machilena are engaged in celebrating a birthday."

Apollonius groaned, "All can keep their birthdays except me. But it is enough that I am miserable; I give my attendants ten pieces of gold, and let them enjoy the festival. And whosoever presumes to utter my name, or rejoice in my hearing, command that his legs be immediately broken."

The steward took the necessary sums, and having purchased supplies, returned to the ship. Now, the bark which contained Apollonius being more honourable than the rest, the feast was celebrated there more sumptuously. It happened that Athanagoras, who was enamoured of the fair Tharsia, walked upon the seashore near the king's ship. "Friends," said he to those who accompanied him, "that vessel pleases me."

The sailors with which she was manned, hearing him applaud their vessel, invited him on board. He went accordingly; and laying down ten gold pieces upon the table, observed,

"You have not invited me for nothing."

They thanked him; and, in answer

to certain questions he had put, informed the prince that their lord was in great affliction, and wished to die: they added, that he had lost a wife and daughter in a foreign country.

"I will give you two pieces of gold," said Athanagoras to Ardalius, one of the servants, "if you will go and say to him that the prince of this city desires a conference."

"Two gold pieces," answered the person he spoke to, "will not repair my broken legs. I pray you send another; for he has determined thus to punish any one who approaches him."

"He made this law for you," returned the prince, "but not, I think, for me: I will descend myself; tell me his name."

They told him — Apollonius.

"Apollonius?" said he to himself; "so Tharsia calls her father."

He hastened into his presence, and beheld a forlorn and desolate person. His beard was of great length, and his head in the wildest disorder. In a low, subdued tone of voice, he said, "Hail, Apollonius."

Apollonius, supposing it to be one of his own people, fixed on him a furious look, but, seeing an honourable and handsome man, remained silent.

"You are doubtless surprised," said the prince, "at my intrusion. I am called Athanagoras, and am prince of this city. Observing your fleet riding at anchor from the shore, I was attracted by it; and amongst other things, being struck with the superior structure of this vessel, your sailors invited me on board. I inquired for their lord, and they answered that he was overwhelmed with grief. I have therefore ventured hither, in the hope of administering comfort to you, and drawing you once more into the light of joy. I pray God that it may prove so."

Apollonius raised his head: "Whosoever you are, go in peace. I am unworthy to appear at the banquet; and I do not desire to live."

Perplexed, yet anxious to console the unhappy king, Athanagoras returned upon deck; and despatched a messenger to the pimp, to require the immediate

presence of Tharsia, whose musical skill and eloquence, he thought, could not but produce some effect. She came, and received instructions from the prince.

"If you succeed," said he, "in softening this royal person's affliction, I will present to you thirty gold sestertia, and as many of silver; moreover, for thirty days, redeem you from the power of your master."

The girl accordingly prepared herself for the task. Approaching the mourner, "Heaven keep you," said she, in a low plaintive voice, "and make you happy; a virgin that hath preserved her honour amid her misfortunes salutes you." She then sang to an instrument, with such a sweet and ravishing melody, that Apollonius was enchanted. Her song related to the fortunes she had experienced, and was to the following effect: — That she fell into the hands of dishonest people, who sought to traffic with her virtue; but that she passed innocent through all her trials. "Thus," continued she, "the rose is protected by its thorns. They who bore me off beat down the

sword of the smiter. I preserved my virtue when attacked by my brutal owner. The wounds of the mind linger, and tears fail. In me behold the only offspring of a royal house. Contain your tears, and limit your anxiety. Look up to heaven, and raise your thoughts above. The Creator and Supporter of mankind is God; nor will He permit the tears of His virtuous servants to be shed in vain."

As she concluded, Apollonius fixed his eyes upon the girl, and groaned deeply: "Wretched man that I am," said he, "how long shall I struggle with my sorrows? But I am grateful for your attentions; and if again permitted to rejoice in the zenith of my power, your memory will support me. You say you are royally descended? — who are your parents? But begone; here are a hundred gold pieces; take them, and speak to me no more. I am consumed with new afflictions."

The girl received his donation, and would have left the ship; but Athanagoras stopped her.

"Whither are you going?" said he; "you have as yet done no good: is your heart so pitiless that you can suffer a man to destroy himself, without striving to prevent it?"

"I have done everything that I could," answered Tharsia: "he gave me a hundred gold pieces, and desired me to depart."

"I will give you two hundred pieces if you will return the money to him, and say, "My lord, I seek your safety, not your money."

Tharsia complied, and seating herself near to the king, said, "If you are determined to continue in the squalid state to which you have accustomed yourself, give me leave to reason with you. I will propose a question: if you can answer it, I will depart; if not, I will return your present and go."

"Keep what I have given; I will not deny your request. For though my evils admit of no cure, yet I determine to hearken to you. Put your question, then, and depart."

"Hear me; there is a house in a certain part of the world which bounds

and rebounds, but it is closed against mankind. This house loudly echoes, but its inhabitant is ever silent; and both — the house and inhabitant — move forward together. Now, if you are a king, as you aver, you should be wiser than I am. Resolve the riddle."

"To prove to you that I am no impostor," said Apollonius, "I will reply. The house which bounds and rebounds and echoes is the wave; the mute inhabitant is a fish, which glides along with its residence."

Tharsia continued, "I am borne rapidly along by the tall daughter of the grove, which equally encloses an innumerable company. I glide over various paths, and leave no footstep."

"When I have answered your questions," said Apollonius, "I will show you much that you know not. Yet I am astonished that one so young should be endowed with wit so keen and penetrating. The tree enclosing a host, and passing through various ways without a trace, is a ship."

"A person passes through circumfer-

ences and temples without injury. There is a great heat in the centre which no one removes. The house is not uncovered, but it suits a naked inhabitant. If you would allay pain, you must enter into fire."

"I would enter, then, into a bath, where fire is introduced by means of round tables. The covered house suits a naked inhabitant; and he who is naked in this situation will perspire."

When she had said these and similar things, the girl threw herself before Apollonius, and drawing aside his hands, embraced him.

"Hear," said she, "the voice of your supplicant: regard a virgin's prayers. It is wicked in men of so much wisdom to destroy themselves. If you lament your lost wife, the mercy of God can restore her to you; if your deceased child, you may yet find her. You ought to live and be glad."

Apollonius, irritated at the girl's pertinacity, arose and pushed her from him with his foot. She fell and cut her cheek, from which the blood copiously flowed.

Terrified at the wound she had received, she burst into tears, and exclaimed,

"O thou eternal Architect of the heavens! look upon my afflictions. Born amid the waves and storms of the ocean, my mother perished in giving life to her daughter. Denied rest even in the grave, she was deposited in a chest, with twenty gold sestertia, and thrown into the sea. But I, unhappy, was delivered by my remaining parent to Stranguilio and Dionysius, with the ornaments befitting a royal extraction. I was by them devoted to death; but whilst I invoked the assistance of God, a number of pirates rushed in and the murderer fled. I was brought hither; and in His own good time God will restore me to my father Apollonius."

Here she concluded, and the royal mourner, struck with her relation, shouted with a loud voice,

"Merciful God! Thou who lookest over heaven and earth, and revealest that which is hidden, blessed be Thy holy name."

Saying this, he fell into the arms of

his daughter. Tenderly be embraced her, and wept aloud for joy.

"My best and only child," said he; "half of my own soul! I shall not die for thy loss. I have found thee, and I wish to live." Exalting his voice yet more, "Run hither, my servants, my friends! all of ye; my misery is at an end. I have found what I had lost — my child, my only daughter!"

Hearing his exclamations, the attendants ran in, and with them the prince Athanagoras. They discovered the enraptured king weeping upon his daughter's neck:

"See, see," said he, "this is she whom I lamented. Half of my soul! now will I live."

Participating in their master's happiness, they all wept.

Apollonius now divested himself of his mourning dress, and attired himself in regal habiliments.

"Oh, my lord," said his followers, "how much your daughter resembles you! Were there no other guide, that would indicate her birth." The delighted

girl overwhelmed her recovered parent with kisses.

"Blessed be God," cried she, "who has been so gracious to me, and given me to see, and live, and die with you."

Then, entering into a more detailed account of her adventures, she related what she had endured from the wretched pimp, and how the Almighty had protected her.

Athanagoras, fearing lest another might demand her in marriage, threw himself at the king's feet, and modestly intimating how instrumental be had been in promoting their happy reunion, besought him to bestow his child upon him.

"I cannot deny you," returned Apollonius, "for you have alleviated her sorrows, and been the means of my present and future happiness. Take her. But deeply shall that rascal feel my vengeance."

Athanagoras immediately returned to the city, and convoked an assembly of the people.

"Let not our city perish," said he, addressing them, "for the crimes of one

impious wretch. Know that King Apollonius, the father of the beautiful Tharsia, has arrived. Behold where his navy rides. He threatens us with instant destruction, unless the scoundrel who would have prostituted his daughter be given up to him."

Scarcely had he spoken when the whole population, men and women, hurried off to implore the king's clemency.

"I advise you," said Athanagoras, "to take the wretch with you."

Seizing the execrable man, they tied his hands to his back, and carried him along to the presence of offended majesty. Apollonius, clad in royal robes, his hair shorn, and crowned, ascended the tribunal with his daughter. The citizens stood round, in expectation of his address.

"Men of Machilenta," said he, "today I have recovered my daughter, whom that villainous pimp would have corrupted. Neither pity, nor prayers, nor gold could prevail with him to desist from his atrocious purposes. Do ye, therefore, avenge my daughter."

The people, with one voice, answered,

"Let him be burnt alive, and his wealth given to the lady."

Instantly the wretch was brought forward and burnt.

"I give you your liberty," said Tharsia to the overseer, "because, by your kindness and the kindness of the citizens, I remained unsullied. I also present to you two hundred gold sestertia."

Turning to the other girls, she added, "Be free, and forget your past habits."

Apollonius, again addressing the people, returned them thanks for their kindness to him and his daughter, and bestowed on them a donation of five hundredweight of gold. Shouts and applause followed; and they immediately set about erecting a statue to their benefactor in the midst of the city. Upon the base was the following inscription: —

TO APOLLONIUS, OF TYRE,
THE PRESERVER OF OUR STATE;
AND TO THE MOST HOLY THARSIA,
HIS VIRGIN DAUGHTER.

A few days after the lady was espoused to Athanagoras, amid the universal joy of the city.

IX.

INTENDING to sail with his daughter, and son-in-law, and followers to his own country by way of Tharsus, an angel admonished him in a dream to make for Ephesus, and there, entering the temple with his daughter and her husband, relate in a loud voice all the varied turns of fortune to which he had been subject from his earliest youth. Accordingly, he

sailed for Ephesus. Leaving his ship, he sought out the temple to which his long-lost wife had retired. When his wife heard that a certain king had come to the temple with his daughter, she arrayed herself in regal ornaments, and entered with an honourable escort. The surrounding multitude was much struck with her beauty and modesty, and said there never was so lovely a virgin. Apollonius, however, knew her not; but such was her splendour that he and his companions fell at her feet, almost fancying her to be Diana, the goddess. He placed on the shrine precious gifts, and then, as the angel had ordained, he commenced his history.

"I was born," said he, "a king. I am of Tyre, and my name is Apollonius. I solved the riddle of the impious Antiochus, who sought to slay me as the detector of his wickedness. I fled, and, by the kindness of King Altistrates, was espoused to his daughter. On the death of Antiochus, I hastened with my wife to ascend his throne; but she died on the passage, after giving birth to this my

daughter. I deposited her in a chest, with twenty gold sestertia, and committed her to the waves. I placed my daughter under the care of those whose subsequent conduct was base and villainous, and I departed to the higher parts of Egypt. After fourteen years I returned to see my daughter. They told me she was dead; and crediting it, I endured the deepest anguish of mind. But my child was at length restored to me."

As he ended, the daughter of Altistrates sprung towards him, and would have clasped him in her arms. He repelled her with indignation, not supposing that it was his wife.

"Oh, my lord!" cried she, weeping, "better half of my soul! why do you use me thus? I am thy wife, the daughter of King Altistrates; and thou art of Tyre; thou art Apollonius, my husband and lord. Thou wert the beloved one who instructed me. Thou wert the shipwrecked man whom I loved with pure and fond regard."

Apollonius awakening at the mention of these well-known circumstances, rec-

ollected his long-lost lady. He fell upon her neck, and wept for joy.

"Blessed be the Most High, who hath restored me my wife and daughter."

"But where," said she, "is our daughter?"

Presenting Tharsia, he replied, "Behold her."

They kissed each other tenderly; and the news of this happy meeting was soon noised abroad through the whole city.

Apollonius again embarked for his own country. Arriving at Antioch, he was crowned, and then hastening to Tyre, he appointed Athanagoras and his daughter to the rule of this place. Afterwards assembling a large army, he sat down before Tharsus, and commanded Stranguilio and Dionysias to be seized and brought before him. Addressing the Tharsians, he inquired,

"Did I ever do an injury to any one of you?"

"No, my lord," answered they; "we are ready to die for you. This statue bears record how you preserved us from death."

"Citizens," returned Apollonius, "I intrusted my daughter to Stranguilio and his wife: they would not restore her."

"Oh, my lord," cried the unhappy woman, "thou hast read her fate inscribed on the monument."

The king directed his daughter to come forward; and Tharsia, reproaching her, said,

"Hail, woman! Tharsia greets thee; Tharsia returned from the grave."

Dionysias trembled; and the citizens wondered and rejoiced. Tharsia then called the steward.

"Theophilus, dost thou know me? Answer distinctly, who employed thee to murder me?"

"My lady Dionysias."

The citizens, hearing this, dragged both the husband and wife out of the city and stoned them. They would have killed Theophilus also, but Tharsia, interposing, freed him from death. "Unless he had given me time to pray," she said, "I should not now have been defending him."

Apollonius tarried here three months,

and gave large gifts to the city. Thence sailing to Pentapolis, the old King Altistrates received them with delight. He lived with his son, and daughter, and grandchild a whole year in happiness. After that he died, full of years, bequeathing the kingdom to his son and daughter.

As Apollonius walked one day upon the sea-shore, he recollected the kind-hearted fisherman who succoured him after his shipwreck, and he ordered him to be seized and brought to the palace. The poor fisherman, perceiving himself under the escort of a guard of soldiers, expected nothing less than death. He was conducted into the presence of the king, who said,

"This is my friend, who helped me after my shipwreck, and showed me the way to the city."

And he gave him to understand that he was Apollonius of Tyre. He then commanded his attendants to carry him two hundred sestertia, with men-servants and maid-servants. Nor did his kindness stop here — he made him one of his personal attendants, and retained him as

long as he lived. Elamitus, who declared to him the intentions of Antiochus, fell at his feet, and said,

"My lord, remember thy servant Elamitus." Apollonius, extending his hand, raised him up, and enriched him. Soon after this a son was born, whom he appointed king in the room of his grandfather, Altistrates.

Apollonius lived with his wife eighty-four years; and ruled the kingdoms of Antioch and Tyre in peace and happiness. He wrote two volumes of his adventures, one of which he laid up in the temple of the Ephesians, and the other in his own library. After death, he went into everlasting life. To which may God, of His infinite mercy, lead us all.

II.

STORY OF THE KNIGHT, GUY OF WARWICK

I.

In the reign of a certain King of England, there were two knights, one of whom was called Guido, and the other Tyrius. The former engaged in many wars, and always triumphed. He was enamoured of a beautiful girl of noble family, but whom he could not prevail upon to marry him, until he had encoun-

tered many enemies for her sake. At last, at the conclusion of a particular exploit, he gained her consent, and married her with great splendour. On the third night succeeding their nuptials, about cock-crowing, he arose from his bed to look upon the sky; and amongst the most lustrous stars he clearly distinguished our Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "Guido, Guido! you have fought much and valiantly for the love of a woman; it is now time that you should encounter my enemies with equal resolution."

Having so said, our Lord vanished. Guido, therefore, perceiving that it was His pleasure to send him to the Holy Land, to avenge Him upon the infidels, returned to his wife:

"I go to the Holy Land; should Providence bless us with a child, attend carefully to its education until my return."

The lady, startled at these words, sprung up from the bed as one distracted, and catching a dagger, which was placed at the head of the couch, cried out,

"Oh, my lord, I have always loved

you, and looked forward with anxiety to our marriage, even when you were in battle, and spreading your fame over all the world; and will you now leave me? First will I stab myself with this dagger."

Guido arose, and took away the weapon.

"My beloved," said he, "your words alarm me. I have vowed to God that I will visit the Holy Land. The best opportunity is the present, before old age come upon me. Be not disturbed; I will soon return."

Somewhat comforted with this assurance, she presented to him a ring: "Take this ring, and as often as you look upon it in your pilgrimage, think of me. I will await with patience your return."

The knight bade her farewell, and departed in company with Tyrius. As for the lady, she gave herself up to her sorrows for many days, and would not be consoled. In due time she brought forth a son of extreme beauty, and tenderly watched over his infant years.

Guido and Tyrius, in the mean while,

passed through many countries, and heard at last that the kingdom of Dacia had been subdued by the infidels.

"My friend," said Guido to his associate, "do you enter this kingdom; and since the king of it is a Christian, assist him with all your power. I will proceed to the Holy Land; and when I have combated against the foes of Christ, I will return to you, and we will joyfully retrace our steps to England."

"Whatever pleases you," replied his friend, "shall please me. I will enter this kingdom; and if you live, come to me. We will return together to our country."

Guido promised; and exchanging kisses, they separated with much regret. The one proceeded to the Holy Land, and the other to Dacia. Guido fought many battles against the Saracens, and was victorious in all; so that his fame flew to the ends of the earth. Tyrius, in like manner, proved fortunate in war, and drove the infidels from the Dacian territory. The king loved and honoured him above all others, and conferred on

him great riches. But there was at that time a savage nobleman, called Plebeus, in whose heart the prosperity of Tyrius excited an inordinate degree of hate and envy. He accused him to the king of treason, and malevolently insinuated that he designed to make himself master of the kingdom. The king credited the assertion, and ungratefully robbed Tyrius of all the honours which his bounty had conferred. Tyrius, therefore, was reduced to extreme want, and had scarcely the common sustenance of life. Thus desolate, he gave free course to his griefs; and exclaimed in great tribulation,

"Wretch that I am! what will become of me?"

II.

While he was taking a solitary walk in sorrow, Guido, journeying alone in the habit of a pilgrim, met him by the way, and knew him, but was not recognized by his friend. He, however, presently remembered Tyrius, and retaining his disguise, approached him, and said, "My friend, from whence are you?"

"From foreign parts," answered Tyrius, "but I have now been many years in this country. I had once a companion in arms, who proceeded to the Holy Land; but if he be alive or dead I know not, nor what have been his fortunes."

"For the love of thy companion, then," said Guido, "suffer me to rest my head upon your lap, and sleep a little, for I am very weary."

He assented, and Guido fell asleep.

Now, while he slept, his mouth stood open; and as Tyrius looked, he discovered a white weasel pass out of it, and run toward a neighbouring mountain, which it entered. After remaining there a short space, it returned, and again ran down the sleeper's throat. Guido straightway awoke and said,

"My friend, I have had a wonderful dream! I thought a weasel went out of my mouth, and entered yon mountain, and after that returned."

"Sir," answered Tyrius, "what you have seen in a dream I beheld with my own eyes. But what that weasel did in the mountain, I am altogether ignorant."

"Let us go and look," observed the other; "perhaps we may find something useful."

Accordingly, they entered the place which the weasel had been seen to enter, and found there a dead dragon filled with gold. There was a sword also, of peculiar polish, and inscribed as follows: "By means of this sword, Guido shall overcome the adversary of Tyrius."

Rejoiced at the discovery, the disguised pilgrim said, "My friend, the treasure is thine, but the sword I will take into my own possession."

"My lord," he answered, "I do not deserve so much gold; why should you bestow it upon me?"

"Raise your eyes," said Guido. "I am your friend!"

Hearing this, he looked at him more narrowly; and when he recollected his heroic associate, he fell upon the earth for joy, and wept exceedingly.

"It is enough; I have lived enough, now that I have seen you."

"Rise," returned Guido, "rise quickly; you ought to rejoice rather than weep at my coming. I will combat your enemy, and we will proceed honourably to England. But tell no one who I am."

Tyrius arose, fell upon his neck, and kissed him. He then collected the gold, and hastened to his home; but Guido knocked at the gate of the king's palace. The porter inquired the cause, and he informed him that he was a pilgrim newly arrived from the Holy Land. He

was immediately admitted, and presented to the king, at whose side sat the invidious nobleman who had deprived Tyrius of his honours and wealth.

"Is the Holy Land at peace?" inquired the monarch.

"Peace is now firmly established," replied Guido, "and many have been converted to Christianity."

King. Did you see an English knight there, called Guido, who has fought so many battles?

Guido. I have seen him often, my lord, and have eaten with him.

King. Is any mention made of the Christian kings?

Guido. Yes, my lord; and of you also. It is said that the Saracens and other infidels had taken possession of your kingdom, and that from their thraldom you were delivered by the valour of a noble knight, named Tyrius, afterwards promoted to great honour and riches. It is likewise said that you unjustly deprived this same Tyrius of what you had conferred, at the malevolent instigation of a knight called Plebeus.

Plebeus. False pilgrim! since thou presumest to utter these lies, hast thou courage enough to defend them? If so, I offer thee battle. That very Tyrius would have dethroned the king. He was a traitor, and therefore lost his honours.

Guido (to the king). My lord, since he has been pleased to say that I am a false pilgrim, and that Tyrius is a traitor, I demand the combat. I will prove upon his body that he lies.

King. I am well pleased with your determination: nay, I entreat you not to desist.

Guido. Furnish me with arms, then, my lord.

King. Whatever you want shall be got ready for you.

The king then appointed a day of battle; and fearing lest the pilgrim Guido should in the mean time fall by treachery, he called to him his daughter, a virgin, and said,

"As you love the life of that pilgrim, watch over him, and let him want for nothing."

In compliance, therefore, with her father's wish, she brought him into her own chamber, bathed him, and supplied him with every requisite. On the day of battle Plebeus armed himself, and standing at the gate, exclaimed,

"Where is that false pilgrim? why does he tarry?"

Guido, hearing what was said, put on his armour, and hastened to the lists. They fought so fiercely, that Plebeus would have died had he not drank. Addressing his antagonist, he said, "Good pilgrim, let me have one draught of water."

"I consent," answered Guido, "provided you faithfully promise to use the same courtesy to me, should I require it."

"I promise," replied the other. Having quenched his thirst, he rushed on Guido, and they continued the battle with redoubled animosity. By and by, however, Guido himself thirsted, and required the same courtesy to be shown him as he had exhibited.

"I vow to Heaven," answered his

enemy, "that you shall taste nothing, except by the strong hand."

At this ungrateful return, Guido, defending himself as well as he could, approached the water, leaped in, and drank as much as he wished. Then springing out, he rushed like a raging lion upon the treacherous Plebeus, who at last sought refuge in flight. The king, observing what passed, caused them to be separated, and to rest for that night, that in the morning they might be ready to renew the contest. The pilgrim then reëntered his chamber, and received from the king's daughter all the kindness it was in her power to display. She bound up his wounds, prepared supper, and placed him upon a strong wooden pallet. Wearied with the exertions of the day, he fell asleep.

III.

Now, Plebeus had seven sons, all strong men. He sent for them, and spoke thus: "My dear children, I give you to understand that, unless this pilgrim be destroyed to-night, I may reckon myself among the dead to-morrow. I never looked upon a braver man."

"My dear father," said one, "we will presently get rid of him."

About midnight, therefore, they en-

tered the girl's chamber, where the pilgrim slept, and beneath which the sea flowed. They said to one another, "If we destroy him in bed, we are no better than dead men: let us toss him, bed and all, into the sea. It will be thought that he has fled."

This scheme was approved; and accordingly they took up the sleeping warrior, and hurled him into the waves. He slept on, however, without perceiving what had happened. The same night a fisherman, following his occupation, heard the fall of the bed, and by the light of the moon saw him floating upon the water. Much surprised, he called out,

"In the name of God, who are you? Speak, that I may render assistance, before the waves swallow you up."

Guido, awoke by the clamour, arose, and perceiving the sky and stars above, and the ocean beneath, wondered where he was.

"Good friend," said he to the fisherman, "assist me, and I will amply reward you. I am the pilgrim who fought

in the lists; but how I got hither, I have no conception."

The man, hearing this, took him into his vessel, and conveyed him to his house, where he rested till the morning.

The sons of Plebeus, in the mean while, related what they thought the end of the pilgrim, and bade their parent discard his fear. The latter, much exhilarated, arose, and armed himself; and going to the gate of the palace, called out,

"Bring forth that pilgrim, that I may complete my revenge."

The king commanded his daughter to awake and prepare him for battle. Accordingly, she went into his room, but he was not to be found. She wept bitterly, exclaiming that some one had conveyed away her treasure; and the surprise occasioned by the intelligence was not less, when it became known that his bed was also missing. Some said that he had fled; others, that he was murdered. Plebeus, however, continued his clamour at the gate.

"Bring out your pilgrim; to-day I will present his head to the king."

Now, while all was bustle and inquiry in the palace, the fisherman made his way to the royal seat, and said,

"Grieve not, my lord, for the loss of the pilgrim. Fishing last night in the sea, I observed him floating upon a bed. I took him on board my vessel, and he is now asleep at my house."

This news greatly cheered the king, and he immediately sent to him to prepare for a renewal of the contest. But Plebeus, terrified, and apprehensive of the consequence, besought a truce. This was denied, even for a single hour. Both, therefore, re-entered the lists, and each struck twice; but at the third blow Guido cut off his opponent's arm, and afterwards his head. He presented it to the king, who evinced himself well satisfied with the event; and hearing that the sons of Plebeus were instruments in the meditated treachery, he caused them to be crucified. The pilgrim was loaded with honours, and offered immense wealth if he would remain with the king, which he resolutely declined. Through him Tyrius was reinstated in his former

dignity, and recompensed for his past suffering. He then bade the king farewell.

"Good friend," returned the monarch, "for the love of heaven, leave me not ignorant of your name."

"My lord," answered he, "I am that Guido of whom you have often heard."

Overjoyed at this happy discovery, the king fell upon his neck, and promised him a large part of his dominions if he would remain. But he could not prevail; and the warrior, after returning his friendly salutation, departed.

IV.

GUIDO embarked for England, and hastened to his own castle. He found a great number of paupers standing about his gate; and amongst them, habited as a pilgrim, sat the countess, his wife. Every day did she thus minister to the poor, bestowing a penny upon each, with a request that he would pray for the safety of her husband Guido, that once more, before death, she might rejoice in his presence. It happened, on the very day of his return, that his son, now seven years of age, sat with his mother among the mendicants, sumptuously apparelled. When he heard his mother address the person who experienced her bounty in the manner mentioned above, "Mother," said he, "is it not my

father whom you recommend to the prayers of these poor people?"

"It is, my son," replied she; "the third night following our marriage he left me, and I have never seen him since."

Now, as the lady walked among her dependents, who were ranged in order, she approached her own husband Guido, and gave him alms — but she knew not who he was. He bowed his head in acknowledgment, fearful lest his voice should discover him. As the countess walked, her son followed; and Guido raising his eyes and seeing his offspring, whom he had not before seen, he could not contain himself. He caught him in his arms, and kissed him.

"My darling child," said he, "may the Lord give thee grace to do that which is pleasing in His eyes."

The damsels of the lady, observing the emotion and action of the pilgrim, called to him and bade him stand there no longer. He approached his wife's presence, and without making himself known, entreated of her permission to

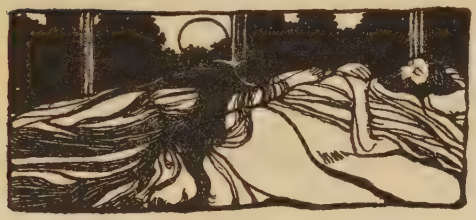
occupy some retired place in the neighbouring forest; and she, supposing that he was the pilgrim he appeared to be, for the love of God and of her husband built him a hermitage, and there he remained a long time. But being on the point of death, he called his attendant, and said,

"Go quickly to the countess; give her that ring, and say that if she wishes to see me, she must come hither with all speed."

The messenger went accordingly, and delivered the ring. As soon as she had seen it, she exclaimed, "It is my lord's ring!" and with a fleet foot hurried into the forest. But Guido was dead.

She fell upon the corpse, and with a loud voice cried, "Woe is me! my hope is extinct!" and then with sighs and lamentations continued, "Where are now the alms I distributed in behalf of my lord? I beheld my husband receive my gifts with his own hands, and knew him not. And as for thee" (apostrophizing the dead body), "thou sawest thy child, and touchedst him. Thou

didst kiss him, and yet revealedst not thyself to me! What hast thou done? Oh, Guido! Guido! never shall I see thee more!" She sumptuously interred his body; and bewailed his decease for many days.



III.

ALLEGORY OF THE FAIR

A CERTAIN king once went to a fair, and took with him a preceptor and his scholar. Standing in the market-place, they perceived eight packages exposed for sale. The scholar questioned his

teacher respecting the first of them. "Pray," said he, "what is the price of poverty — that is, of tribulation for the love of God?"

Preceptor. The kingdom of heaven.

Scholar. It is a great price indeed. Open the second package, and let us see what it contains.

Preceptor. It contains meekness: blessed are the meek.

Scholar. Meekness, indeed, is a very illustrious thing, and worthy of divine majesty. What is its price?

Preceptor. Gold shall not be given for it; nor shall silver be weighed against it. I demand earth for it; and nothing but earth will I receive.

Scholar. There is a spacious tract of uninhabited country between India and Britain. Take as much of it as you please.

Preceptor. No; this land is the land of the dying, the land which devours its inhabitants. Men die there. I demand the land of the living.

Scholar. I muse at what you say. All die, and would you alone be exempt?

Would you live for ever? Behold, blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. What is there in the third package?

Preceptor. Hunger and thirst.

Scholar. For how much may these be purchased?

Preceptor. For righteousness. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Scholar. Therefore you shall possess righteousness, provided there be no neglect. What does the fourth contain?

Preceptor. Tears, wailings, and woe; Moisture above, and moisture below.

Scholar. It is not customary to buy tears and wailings, yet I will buy it; because the saints desire it at this price. Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. What is the fifth package?

Preceptor. It is a precious thing, and contains mercy, which I will weigh to please you. At a word, I will take mercy for mercy, eternity for time.

Scholar. You were a bad umpire to ask this, unless mercy should plead for

you. Nevertheless, she shall become your surety. And blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. In this life we abound in poverty and wretchedness and hardship. Undo the sixth package; perhaps it may contain something better.

Preceptor. It is clearly full; but it loves not, like a purple robe, to be exposed before the common eye; you shall see it in private, and there we will agree about the price.

Scholar. Very well; what is it?

Preceptor. Purity; which is extremely valuable. There are gold and silver vases, namely, piety, goodness, charity, and spiritual joy. Now, then, let us open these precious garments. Here are lectures, meditations, prayers, and contemplations. The judgments of the Lord are justified in themselves, and more to be desired than gold and precious stones.

Scholar. There is a great reward in the possession. Ask, therefore, what ye will.

Preceptor. To see God.

Scholar. Therefore, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Open the seventh package.

Preceptor. It contains peace.

Scholar. What! are you going to sell me your peace?

Preceptor. It does not accord with my poverty, nor would it with your justice and great wealth, to take anything of me for nothing. But your liberality will make me rich. What then? I am a mean country fellow, and made of clay; formed of the very dust of the earth. My want of nobility oppresses me, and I would no longer bear the reproach which says, "You are earth, and to earth you shall go." I would rather have it said to me, "You are heaven, and to heaven you shall go." I eagerly desire to fulfil the destiny of the sons of God; I would become a son of God.

Scholar. I have done: I confess the truth, and distrust you no longer. Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the sons of God. If, therefore, you preserve the love of a son, you shall receive the paternal inheritance.

Now, what is contained in the last package? Explain it.

Preceptor. It contains only tribulation and persecution for the sake of righteousness.

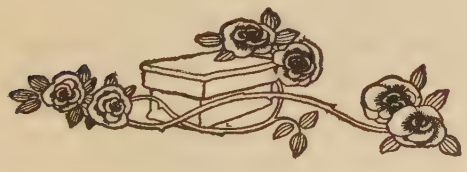
Scholar. And what do you want for it?

Preceptor. The kingdom of heaven.

Scholar. I gave you that as the price of poverty!

Preceptor. True; but month after month, week after week, man wanders in his wishes. You are mistaken: I ask this for the present week or month; as to the future I wait humbly.

Scholar. I marvel at your sagacity in making a bargain. Now hear, good and faithful servant! because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will appoint thee lord over many: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.



IV.

OF THE WORLD'S WONDERS

PLINY says that there are certain men who have the heads of dogs; who bark when they converse, and clothe themselves in the skins of animals. These represent preachers, who ought to be coarsely clad, as an example to others. — Also in India there are men who possess a single eye, which is placed in the forehead. They live upon the flesh of animals. These are they who have the eye of reason.

In Africa there are women without heads, having eyes and mouth in their breasts. Such are like humble men. — In the East, over against the terrestrial Paradise, are people who never eat, and whose mouth is so small that what they

drink is conveyed into the stomach by means of a reed. They live upon the odour of apples and flowers; and a bad smell instantly destroys them. These designate abstemious men; and to die of an ill odour is to die of sin. — There are men without a nose, but otherwise with complete faces; and whatsoever they see they think good. Such are the foolish of the world. — And there are some whose nose and lower lip is so long, that it covers all the face, while they sleep. These are just men. — In Scythia are men with ears that completely envelop their whole body. These represent such as listen to the word of God. — Some men there are who walk like cattle, and these are they who honour neither God nor His saints. — There are likewise people who are horned, having short noses and the feet of a goat. These are the proud. — In Æthiopia are men with but one leg, whose velocity nevertheless is such, that they run down the swiftest animal. These are the charitable. — In India are pygmies two cubits long; they ride upon goats, and make war against

the cranes. These are they who begin well, but cease before they are perfect. — In India there are also men who possess six hands. They are without clothes, but are extremely hairy, and dwell in rivers. These are the zealous workers who labour and obtain eternal life. — There, too, are men who have six fingers on each hand, and six toes on each foot; during the week they keep themselves pure, and on the seventh day sanctify themselves. — Certain women there are bearded to the breast; but their heads are totally bare. These represent men who obey the Church, and are turned from that course neither by love nor by hatred. — In Ethiopia there are men with four eyes each. These are they who fear God, the world, the devil, and the flesh. They turn one eye to God, to live well; another to the world, to flee from it; a third to the devil, to resist him; and the last to the flesh, to chastise it. — In Europe are very beautiful men; but they have a crane's head, and neck, and beak. These designate judges, who ought to have long necks

and beaks, in order that what the heart thinks may be long before it reaches the mouth. If all judges were thus we should have fewer injudicious awards.

V.

STORY OF THE KNIGHT PLACIDUS

In the reign of Trajan there lived a knight named Placidus, who was commander-in-chief of the emperor's armies. He was of a very merciful disposition, but a worshipper of idols. His wife also participated in the same feelings, and adhered to the same religious rites. They had two sons, educated in all the magnificence of their age and station; and from the general kindness and goodness of their hearts, they merited a revelation of the way of truth.

As he was one day following the

chase, he discovered a herd of deer, amongst which was one remarkable for the beauty and magnitude of its form. Separating itself from the rest, it plunged into the thicker part of the brake. While the hunters, therefore, occupied themselves with the remainder of the herd, Placidus gave his attention to the noble animal in question, and followed the course it had taken with all the celerity in his power. While he was giving all his strength to the pursuit, the stag at length scaled a lofty precipice, and Placidus, approaching as near to it as he could, considered by what means it might be secured.

But as he regarded it with fixed attention, there appeared, impressed upon the centre of the brow, the form of the cross, which glittered with greater splendour than a meridian sun. Upon this cross an image of Jesus Christ was suspended; and as formerly happened to the ass of Balaam, utterance was supplied to the stag, which thus addressed the hunter: "Why dost thou persecute me, Placidus? For thy sake have I assumed the shape

of this animal: I am Christ whom thou ignorantly worshippest. Thine alms have gone up before Me, and therefore I come, that as thou hast hunted this stag, so may I hunt thee."

Some indeed assert that the image, hanging between the deer's antlers, said these things. However that may be, Placidus, filled with terror, fell from his horse; and in about an hour returning to himself, arose from the earth, and said,

"Declare what Thou sayest, that I may believe in Thee."

"I am Christ, O Placidus! I created heaven and earth; I caused the light to arise, and divided it from the darkness. I appointed days, and seasons, and years. I formed man out of the dust of the earth; and I became incarnate for the salvation of mankind. I was crucified, and buried; and on the third day I rose again."

When Placidus heard this, he fell again upon the earth, and exclaimed,

"I believe, O Lord, that Thou art He that made all things; and that Thou art He who bringest back the wanderer."

The Lord answered, "If thou believest this, go into the city and be baptized."

"Wouldst Thou, O Lord, that I impart what has befallen me to my wife and children, that they also may believe?"

"Do so; tell them that they also may be cleansed from their iniquities. And do you, on the morrow, return hither, where I will appear again, and show you more fully of the future."

Placidus, therefore, departed to his own home, and communicated all that had passed to his wife. But she, too, had had a revelation; and in like manner had been enjoined to believe in Christ, together with her children. So they hastened at midnight to the bishop of the city of Rome, where they were entertained and baptized with great joy. Placidus was called Eustacius, and his wife, Theosbyta; the two sons, Theosbytus and Agapetus. In the morning Eustacius, according to custom, went out to hunt, and coming with his attendants near the place, he dispersed them, as if for the purpose of discovering the

prey. Immediately the vision of yesterday reappeared, and prostrating himself, he said,

"I implore Thee, O Lord, to make clear what Thou didst promise to Thy servant."

"Blessed art thou, Eustacius, because thou hast received the laver of My grace and thereby overcome the devil. Now hast thou trod him to dust who beguiled thee. Now will thy fidelity appear; for the devil, whom thou hast deserted, is arming himself against thee in a variety of ways. Much must thou undergo ere thou possessest the crown of victory. Much must thou suffer that thou mayst be humbled, and abandon the deep-seated vanity of this world, and once more be raised by spiritual wealth. Fail not, therefore, nor look back upon thy former condition. Thou must demonstrate thyself another Job; but from the very depth of thy humiliation, I will restore thee to the summit of earthly splendour. Choose, then, whether thou wouldst prefer thy trials now, or at the conclusion of life."

Eustacius replied, "If it become me, O Lord, to be exposed to trials, let them presently approach; but do Thou uphold me, and supply me with patient fortitude."

"Be bold, Eustacius: My grace shall support your souls."

Saying thus, the Lord ascended into heaven. After which Eustacius returned home to his wife, and explained to her what had been decreed. In a few days a pestilence carried off the whole of their men-servants and maid-servants; and before long the sheep, horses, and cattle also perished. Robbers plundered their habitation, and despoiled them of every ornament; while he himself, together with his wife and sons, fled naked and in the deepest distress. But devoutly they worshipped God; and, apprehensive of an Egyptian redness, went secretly away. Thus were they reduced to utter poverty.

The king and the senate, greatly afflicted with their general's calamities, sought for, but found not the slightest trace of him. In the mean time this unhappy family approached the sea; and finding a ship ready to sail, they embarked in

it. The master of the vessel observing that the wife of Eustacius was very beautiful, determined to secure her; and when they had crossed the sea, demanded their passage money, which, as he anticipated, they did not possess. Notwithstanding the vehement and indignant protestations of Eustacius, he seized upon his wife; and, beckoning to the mariners, commanded them to cast the unfortunate husband headlong into the sea. Perceiving, therefore, that all opposition was useless, he took up his two children, and departed with much and heavy sorrow.

"Alas for me and for you!" he exclaimed, as he wept over his bereaved offspring; "your poor mother is lost, and in a strange land, in the arms of a strange lord, must lament her fate."

Travelling along, he came to a river, the water of which ran so high that it appeared hazardous in an eminent degree to cross with both the children at the same time; one, therefore, he placed carefully upon the bank, and then passed over with the other in his arms. This effected, he laid it upon the ground, and

returned immediately for the remaining child. But in the midst of the river, accidentally glancing his eye back, he beheld a wolf hastily snatch up the child, and run with it into an adjoining wood.

Despairing of saving it, he hastened to the other; but while he was yet at some distance, a huge lion approached the child he had left, and, seizing it, presently disappeared. To follow was useless, for he was in the middle of the water. Giving himself up, therefore, to his desperate situation, he began to lament and to pluck away his hair; and would have cast himself into the stream had not Divine Providence preserved him.

Certain shepherds, however, observing the lion carrying off the child in his teeth, pursued him with dogs; and by the peculiar dispensation of Heaven it was dropped unhurt. As for the other, some ploughmen witnessing the adventure, shouted lustily after the wolf, and succeeded in liberating the poor victim from its jaws. Now, it happened that both the shepherds and ploughmen resided in the same village, and brought up

the children amongst them. But Eustacius knew nothing of this, and his affliction was so poignant that he was unable to control his complaints.

"Alas!" he would say, "once I flourished like a luxuriant tree, but now I am stripped of my leaves. Once I was encompassed with military ensigns and bands of armed men; now I am a single being in the universe: I have lost all my children, and everything that I possessed. Remember, O Lord, that thou saidst my trials should resemble Job's; behold, they exceed them. For, although he was destitute, he had a couch, however vile, to repose upon; I, alas! have nothing. He had compassionating friends, while I have savage beasts, who have carried off my sons, for my friends. His wife remained, but mine is forcibly carried off. Assuage my anguish, O Lord! and place a bridle upon my lips, lest I utter foolishness, and be cast away from before Thy face." With such words he gave free course to the fulness of his heart; and after much travel entered a village, where he abode. In this place he continued

for fifteen years, and tended the lambs of the men of that place as their hired servant.

To return to the two boys. They were educated in the same neighbourhood, but had no knowledge that they were brothers. And as for the wife of Eustacius, she preserved her purity, and suffered not the infamous usage which circumstances led her to apprehend. After some time her persecutor died.

In the mean while the Roman emperor was beset by his enemies, and recollecting how valiantly Placidus had behaved himself in similar straits, his grief at the deplorable mutation of fortune was renewed. He despatched soldiers through various parts of the world in pursuit of them; and promised to the discoverer infinite rewards and honours. It happened that some of the emissaries, being of those who had attended upon the person of Placidus, came into the country in which he laboured, and one of them he recognized by his gait. The sight of these men brought back to the exile's mind the situation of wealth and honour

which he had once possessed; and being filled with fresh trouble at the recollection —

"O Lord!" he exclaimed, "even as beyond expectation I have seen these people again, so let me be restored to my beloved wife. Of my children I speak not; for I know too well that they are devoured by wild beasts."

At that moment a voice whispered,

"Be faithful, Eustacius, and thou wilt shortly recover thy lost honours, and again look upon thy wife and offspring."

Now, when the soldiers met Placidus, they knew not who he was; and accosting him, they asked if he were acquainted with any foreigner named Placidus, with his wife and two sons. He replied in the negative, but requested that they would tarry in his house. They consented; and he conducted them home, and waited on them. And here, as before, at the recollection of his former splendour, his tears flowed. Unable to contain himself, he went out of doors, and when he had washed his face he re-entered, and continued his service. By

and by the appearance of their ancient master underwent a more exact scrutiny; and one said to the other, "Surely this man bears great resemblance to him we inquire after."

"Of a truth," answered his companion, "you say well. Let us examine if he possess a scar on his head, which he received in action."

They did so, and finding a scar which indicated a similar wound, they leaped up and embraced him, and inquired after his wife and sons. He related his adventures; and the neighbours, coming in, listened with wonder to the account delivered by the soldiers of his military achievements and former magnificence. Then, obeying the command of the emperor, they clothed him in sumptuous apparel. On the fifteenth day they reached the imperial court; and the emperor, apprized of his coming, went out to meet him, and saluted him with great gladness.

Eustacius related all that had befallen him; he was then invested with the command of the army, and restored to every

office that he had held prior to his departure. When the soldiers were numbered, they were found to be too few to meet the enemy. He therefore drew together from all parts the young men of the country; and it fell in the lot of the village where his own children were educated, to send two to the army; and these very youths were selected by the inhabitants as the best and bravest of their number. They appeared before the general; and their elegant manners, united to a singular propriety of conduct, won his esteem. He placed them in the van of his troops, and began his march against the enemy. After the rout of the foe, he caused his army to halt for three days at a certain place, where, as it happened, his wife was living in poverty. Strange to say, the sons themselves, in the general distribution of the soldiers, were quartered with their own mother, but all the while ignorant with whom they were stationed.

About mid-day the lads, sitting together, related the various mutations to which their infancy had been subject;

and the mother, who was at no great distance, became an attentive auditor.

"Of what I was, while a child," said the elder of the brothers, "I remember nothing, except that my beloved father was a leader of a company of soldiers; and that my mother, who was very beautiful, had two sons, of whom I was the elder. During the night we accompanied our parents from the habitation in which we had constantly resided, and embarking on board a vessel that immediately put to sea, sailed I know not whither. Our mother remained in the ship, but wherefore, I am also ignorant. In the mean time our father carried my brother and myself in his arms, and me he left upon the nearer bank of a river, until he had conveyed the younger of us across. But no sooner had he accomplished his design, and was returning to my assistance, than a wolf darted from a thicket and bore my brother off in his mouth. Before he could hasten back to his succour, a prodigious lion seized upon me, and carried me into a neighbouring wood. Certain shepherds, however, de-

livered and educated me amongst them, as you know. What has become of my father and my brother, I know not."

The younger brother here burst into a flood of tears, and exclaimed,

"Surely I have found my brother; for they who brought me up frequently declared that I was emancipated from the jaws of a wolf."

Then did they exchange embraces and shed tears. The mother, who listened, it may be well supposed, with intense interest to what was going forward, felt a strong conviction that they were her own children. She was silent, however; and the next day went to the commander of the forces, and entreated permission to go into her own country.

"I am a Roman woman," said she, "and a stranger in these parts."

As she uttered these words, her eye fixed with an earnest and anxious gaze upon the countenance of him she addressed. It was her husband, whom she now for the first time recollected; and she threw herself at his feet unable to contain her joy.

"My lord," cried the enraptured matron, "I entreat you to relate some circumstances of your past life; for, unless I greatly mistake, you are Placidus, the master of the soldiery, since known by the name of Eustacius, whom our blessed Saviour converted, and tried by such and such temptations: I am his wife, taken from him at sea by a perfidious wretch, but who accomplished not his atrocious purposes. I had two sons, called Agapetus and Theosbytus."

When Eustacius heard this, he looked at her earnestly, and saw that it was his wife. They embraced and wept; giving glory to God, who brings joy to the sorrowful. The wife then observed,

"My lord, what has become of our children?"

"Alas!" replied he, "they were carried off by wild beasts;" and he repeated the circumstance of their loss.

"Give thanks," said his wife, "give manifold thanks to the Lord; for as His Providence hath revealed our existence to each other, so will He give us back our beloved offspring."

"Did I not tell you," returned he, "that wild beasts had devoured them?"

"True; but yesternight, as I sat in the garden, I overheard two young men relate the occurrences of their childhood, and I believe them to be our sons. Interrogate them, and they will tell you."

Messengers were immediately despatched for this purpose, and a few questions convinced Eustacius of the full completion of his happiness. They fell upon each other's necks and wept aloud. It was a joyful occasion; and the whole army rejoiced at their being found, and at the victory over the barbarians. Previous to their return the Emperor Trajan died, and was succeeded by Adrian, more wicked even than his predecessor. However, he received the conqueror and his family with great magnificence, and sumptuously entertained them at his own table. But the day following the emperor would have proceeded to the temple of his idols to sacrifice, in consequence of the late victory; and desired his guests to accompany him.

"My lord," said Eustacius, "I worship the God of the Christians; and Him only do I serve, and propitiate with sacrifice."

The emperor, full of rage, placed him, with his whole family, in the arena, and let loose a ferocious lion upon them. But the lion, to the astonishment of all, held down his head before them, as if in reverence, and humbly went from them. On which the emperor ordered a brazen bull to be heated, and into this his victims were cast alive; but with prayer and supplication they commended themselves to the mercy of God, and three days after, being taken out of the furnace in the presence of the emperor, so untouched were they by the fire that not a hair of their heads was singed, nor had the fiery vapours in any way affected them.

The Christians buried their corpses in the most honourable manner, and over them constructed an oratory. They perished in the first year of Adrian, A. D. 120, in the calends of November; or, as some write, the 12th of the calends of October.

VI.

THE EMPEROR JOVINIAN

When Jovinian was emperor, he possessed very great power; and as he lay in bed reflecting upon the extent of his dominions, his heart was elated to an extraordinary degree. "Is there," he impiously asked, "is there any other god than me?" Amid such thoughts he fell asleep.

In the morning he reviewed his troops, and said, "My friends, after breakfast we will hunt." Preparations being made accordingly, he set out with a large retinue. During the chase, the emperor felt such extreme oppression from the

heat, that he believed his very existence depended upon a cold bath. As he anxiously looked around, he discovered a sheet of water at no great distance.

"Remain here," said he to his guard, "until I have refreshed myself in yonder stream."

Then spurring his steed, he rode hastily to the edge of the water. Alighting, he divested himself of his apparel, and experienced the greatest pleasure from its invigorating freshness and coolness. But whilst he was thus employed, a person similar to him in every respect — in countenance and gesture — arrayed himself unperceived in the emperor's dress, and then mounting his horse, rode off to the attendants. The resemblance to the sovereign was such, that no doubt was entertained of the reality; and when the sport was over command was issued for their return to the palace.

Jovinian, however, having quitted the water, sought in every possible direction for his horse and clothes, and to his utter astonishment could find neither. Vexed beyond measure at the circumstance (for

he was completely naked, and saw no one near to assist him), he began to reflect upon what course he should pursue.

"Miserable man that I am," said he, "to what a strait am I reduced! There is, I remember, a knight residing close by, whom I have promoted to a military post; I will go to him, and command his attendance and service. I will then ride on to the palace and strictly investigate the cause of this extraodinary conduct."

Jovinian proceeded, naked and ashamed, to the castle of the aforesaid and beat loudly at the gate. The porter inquired the cause of the knocking.

"Open the gate," said the enraged emperor, "and you will see whom I am."

The gate was opened; and the porter, struck with the strange appearance he exhibited, replied, "In the name of all that is marvellous, what are you?"

"I am," said he, "Jovinian, your emperor; go to your lord, and command him from me to supply the wants of his

sovereign. I have lost both horse and clothes."

"Thou liest, infamous ribald!" shouted the porter; "just before thy approach, the Emperor Jovinian, accompanied by the officers of his household, entered the palace. My lord both went and returned with him; and but even now sat with him at meat. But because thou hast called thyself the emperor, my lord shall know of thy presumption."

The porter entered, and related what had passed. Jovinian was introduced, but the knight retained not the slightest recollection of his master, although the emperor remembered him.

"Who are you?" said the former, "and what is your name?"

"I am the Emperor Jovinian," rejoined he; "canst thou have forgotten me? At such a time I promoted thee to a military command."

"Why, thou most audacious scoundrel," said the knight, "darest thou call thyself the emperor? I rode with him myself to the palace, from whence I am this moment returned. But thy impu-

dence shall not go without its reward. Flog him," said he, turning to his servants, "flog him soundly, and drive him away."

This sentence was immediately executed, and the poor emperor, bursting into a convulsion of tears, exclaimed, "Oh, my God, is it possible that one whom I have so much honoured and exalted should do this? Not content with pretending ignorance of my person, he orders these merciless villains to abuse me!"

He next thought within himself, "There is a certain duke, one of my privy councillors, to whom I will make known my calamity. At least, he will enable me to return decently to the palace."

To him, therefore, Jovinian proceeded, and the gate was opened at his knock. But the porter, beholding a naked man, exclaimed in the greatest amaze,

"Friend, who are you, and why come you here in such a guise?"

He replied, "I am your emperor; I have accidentally lost my clothes and my

horse, and I have come for succour to your lord. I beg you, therefore, to do me this errand to the duke."

The porter, more and more astonished, entered the hall, and communicated the strange intelligence which he had received.

"Bring him in," said the duke. He was brought in, but neither did he recognize the person of the emperor.

"What art thou?" he asked.

"I am the emperor," replied Jovinian, "and I have promoted thee to riches and honour, since I made thee a duke and one of my councillors."

"Poor mad wretch," said the duke, "a short time since I returned from the palace, where I left the very emperor thou assumest to be. But since thou hast claimed such rank, thou shalt not escape unpunished. Carry him to prison, and feed him with bread and water."

The command was no sooner delivered than obeyed; and the following day his naked body was submitted to the lash, and he was again cast into the dungeon.

Thus afflicted, he gave himself up to the wretchedness of his untoward condition. In the agony of his heart, he said,

"What shall I do? Oh, what will be my destiny? I am loaded with the coarsest contumely, and exposed to the malicious observation of my people. It were better to hasten immediately to my palace, and there discover myself — my servants will know me; and even if they do not, my wife will know me!"

Escaping, therefore, from his confinement, he approached the palace and beat upon the gate.

"Who art thou?" said the porter.

"It is strange," replied the aggrieved emperor, "it is strange that thou shouldest not know me; thou, who hast served me so long!"

"Served thee!" returned the porter indignantly, "thou liest abominably. I have served none but the emperor."

"Why," said the other, "thou knowest that I am he. Yet, though you disregard my words, go, I implore you, to the empress; communicate what I will tell

thee, and by these signs bid her send the imperial robes, of which some rogue has deprived me. The signs I tell thee of are known to none but to ourselves."

"In verity," said the porter, "thou art mad: at this very moment my lord sits at table with the empress herself. Nevertheless, out of regard for thy singular merits, I will intimate thy declaration within; and rest assured, thou wilt presently find thyself most royally beaten."

The porter went accordingly, and related what he had heard. But the empress became very sorrowful, and said,

"Oh, my lord, what am I to think? The most hidden passages of our lives are revealed by an obscene fellow at the gate, and repeated to me by the porter, on the strength of which he declares himself the emperor and my espoused lord!"

When the fictitious monarch was apprised of this, he commanded him to be brought in. He had no sooner entered than a large dog, which couched upon the hearth, and had been much cherished

by him, flew at his throat, and, but for timely prevention, would have killed him. A falcon, also, seated upon her perch, no sooner beheld him, than she broke her jesses and flew out of the hall. Then the pretended emperor, addressing those who stood about him, said, "My friends, hear what I will ask of yon ribald. Who are you? and what do you want?"

"These questions," said the suffering man, "are very strange. You know I am the emperor and master of this place."

The other, turning to the nobles who sat or stood at the table, continued, "Tell me, on your allegiance, which of us two is your lord and master?"

"Your majesty asks us an easy thing," replied they, "and need not to remind us of our allegiance. That obscene wretch we have never before seen. You alone are he, whom we have known from childhood; and we entreat that this fellow may be severely punished, as a warning to others how they give scope to their mad presumption."

Then turning to the empress, the

usurper said, "Tell me, my lady, on the faith you have sworn, do you know this man who calls himself thy lord and emperor?"

She answered, "My lord, how can you ask such a question? Have I not known thee more than thirty years, and borne thee many children? Yet, at one thing I do admire. How can this fellow have acquired so intimate a knowledge of what has passed between us?"

The pretended emperor made no reply, but addressing the real one, said, "Friend, how darest thou to call thyself emperor? We sentence thee, for this unexampled impudence, to be drawn, without loss of time, at the tail of a horse. And if thou utterest the same words again, thou shalt be doomed to an ignominious death."

He then commanded his guards to see the sentence put in force, but to preserve his life. The unfortunate emperor was now almost distracted; and urged by his despair, wished vehemently for death.

"Why was I born?" he exclaimed.

"My friends shun me; and my wife and children will not acknowledge me.

But there is my confessor, still. To him will I go; perhaps he will recollect me, because he has often received my confessions."

He went accordingly, and knocked at the window of his cell.

"Who is there?" said the confessor.

"The emperor, Jovinian," was the reply; "open the window, and I will speak to thee." The window was opened; but no sooner had he looked out than he closed it again in great haste.

"Depart from me," said he, "accursed thing: thou art not the emperor, but the devil incarnate."

This completed the miseries of the persecuted man; and he tore his hair, and plucked up his beard by the roots.

"Woe is me!" he cried, "for what strange doom am I reserved?"

At this crisis, the impious words which, in the arrogance of his heart, he had uttered, crossed his recollection. Immediately he beat again at the window of the confessor's cell, and exclaimed, "For the love of Him who was suspended from the cross, hear my con-

fession with the window closed." The recluse said, "I will do this with pleasure;" and then Jovinian acquainted him with every particular of his past life; and principally how he had lifted himself up against his Maker, saying that he believed there was no other god but himself.

The confession made, and absolution given, the recluse opened the window, and directly knew him.

"Blessed be the most high God," said he, "now do I know thee. I have here a few garments: clothe thyself, and go to the palace. I trust that they also will recognize thee."

The emperor did as the confessor directed. The porter opened the gate, and made a low obeisance to him. "Dost thou know me?" said he.

"Very well, my lord!" replied the menial; "but I marvel that I did not observe you go out."

Entering the hall of his mansion, Jovinian was received by all with a profound reverence. The strange emperor was at that time in another apartment

with the queen; and a certain knight came out of the chamber, looked narrowly at Jovinian, and returning to the supposed emperor, said,

"My lord, there is one in the hall to whom everybody bends; he so much resembles you, that we know not which is the emperor."

Hearing this, the usurper said to the empress, "Go and see if you know him."

She went, and returned greatly surprised at what she saw.

"Oh, my lord," said she, "I declare to you that I know not whom to trust."

"Then," returned he, "I will go and determine you."

When he had entered the hall, he took Jovinian by the hand and placed him near him. Addressing the assembly, he said, "By the oaths you have taken, declare which of us is your emperor."

The empress answered, "It is incumbent on me to speak first; but Heaven is my witness that I am unable to determine which is he."

And so said all. Then the feigned emperor spoke thus,

"My friends, hearken! That man is your king and your lord. He exalted himself to the disparagement of his Maker; and God, therefore, scourged and hid him from your knowledge. I am the angel that watches over his soul, and I have guarded his kingdom while he was undergoing his penance. But his repentance removes the rod; he has now made ample satisfaction, and again let your obedience wait upon him. Commend yourselves to the protection of Heaven."

So saying, he disappeared. The emperor gave thanks to God, and lived happily, and finished his days in peace.

VII.

THE KING'S FOUR SONS

THERE was a wise and rich king who possessed a beloved, but not a loving wife. She had three illegitimate sons, who proved ungrateful and rebellious to their reputed parent.

In due time she brought forth another son, whose legitimacy was undisputed; and after arriving at a good old age, he died, and was buried in the royal sepulchre of his fathers. But the death of

the old king caused great strife amongst his surviving sons, about the right of succession. All of them advanced a claim, and none would relinquish it to the other; the three first presuming upon their priority in birth, and the last upon his legitimacy.

In this strait, they agreed to refer the absolute decision of their cause to a certain honourable knight of the late king. When this person, therefore, heard their difference, he said, "Follow my advice, and it will greatly benefit you. Draw from its sepulchre the body of the deceased monarch; prepare, each of you, a bow and single shaft, and whosoever transfixes the heart of his father shall obtain the kingdom."

The counsel was approved, the body was taken from its repository and bound to a tree. The arrow of the first son wounded the king's right hand — on which, as if the contest were determined, they proclaimed him heir to the throne.

But the second arrow went nearer, and entered the mouth; so that he, too,

considered himself the undoubted lord of the kingdom.

However, the third perforated the heart itself, and consequently imagined that his claim was fully decided, and his succession sure.

It now came to the turn of the fourth and last son to shoot; but he broke forth into a lamentable cry, and with eyes swimming in tears, said,

"Oh! my poor father; have I then lived to see you the victim of an impious contest — thine own offspring lacerate thy unconscious clay? — Far, oh! far be it from me to strike thy venerated form, whether living or dead."

No sooner had he uttered these words, than the nobles of the realm, together with the whole people, unanimously elected him to the throne; and depriving the three barbarous wretches of their rank and wealth, expelled them for ever from the kingdom.

VIII.

JUSTICE, TRUTH, MERCY, AND PEACE

A CERTAIN great king had a handsome son, who proved himself, on all occasions, wise, bold, and courteous. The same king had four daughters also, whose names were Justice, Truth, Mercy, and Peace.

Now, the king, being very desirous of procuring for his son a suitable partner, despatched a messenger in search of a beautiful virgin, to whom he should be united. At last, the daughter of the King of Jerusalem was selected, and married to the young prince, who was much struck with the beauty of his bride. At this time there was in the court a servant whom the king's son principally

trusted, and to whom he had confided the care of one of his provinces.

This man, in return for the benefits accumulated upon him, seduced the lady, and wasted the country over which he was placed. When the husband, therefore, knew of his wife's infidelity, he was overwhelmed with sorrow, and repudiated her with the loss of every honour. Thus circumstanced, she fell into extreme poverty; and, reduced to despair by the wretchedness of her condition, walked from place to place begging her bread, and wishing for the death that came not to her relief.

But at length the husband, compassionating her distress, sent messengers to recall her to his court.

"Come, lady," they said, "come in perfect safety. Thy lord wishes thy return; fear nothing."

Yet she refused, and exclaimed, "Tell my lord that I would willingly come to him, but I am unable to do so. If he asks why, say, in compliance with an imperious law. If a man marry, and his wife prove an adultress, he shall give

her a writing of divorcement; but from that hour, she can be no longer his wife. To me such a writing has been given — for, alas! I am an adultress; therefore, it is impossible for me to return to my lord."

"But," replied the messengers, "our lord is greater than the law which he made himself: and since he is disposed to show mercy towards you, we repeat that you may properly comply with his wishes, secure from further punishment or reproach."

"How shall I know that?" said the lady; "if my beloved would assure me of it; if he would deign to come and kiss me with the kiss of his lip, then should I feel certain of favour."

When the messengers communicated to the prince what had passed between them and his afflicted wife, he called together the noblemen of his kingdom, and deliberated upon the measures it became him to adopt. After mature reflection, they determined that some man of experience and judgment should be sent to persuade her to return. But they who

answered this description refused to undertake the office; and the husband, in his extremity, despatched once more a messenger, whom he commissioned to speak thus:

"What can I do for you? There is not a man in my dominions who will execute my wishes!" These words increased the anguish of the unfortunate lady, and she wept bitterly. Her condition was related to the prince, and he earnestly besought his father to give him permission to bring back his wife, and to assuage her sorrows.

The king acquiesced — "Go," said he, "go now in thy might, and reinstate her in the seat from which she has fallen."

The messengers were then ordered to return and apprize her of the purposed visit. But the prince's elder sister, that is to say, Justice, understanding what was meditated, hastened to her father, and said,

"My Lord, you are just. You decided rightly concerning that harlot. You properly sanctioned the writing of

divorcement, whereby she could no longer be my brother's wife; therefore, to the law let her appeal. And if, in violation of justice, you act thus, be assured that I will no longer be accounted your daughter."

The second sister, who was called Truth, then said, "My father, she has spoken truly. You have adjudged this woman an adultress: if you permit her to return, you destroy the very essence of truth, and therefore I, too, will no more fulfil the offices of a daughter."

But the third sister, called Mercy, hearing what had been said by the other two, exclaimed, "Oh, my Lord, I also am thy daughter: forgive the offence of this repentant woman. If thou wilt not, thou abandonest Mercy, and she will never again acknowledge thee her father."

The fourth sister, whose name was Peace, terrified at the discord between her parent and sisters, desired to leave the country, and fled.

Justice and Truth, however, relin-

quished not their purpose; and, putting into their father's hands a naked sword, said,

"My Lord, we present to you the sword of Justice. Take it, and strike the harlot who has wronged our brother."

But Mercy, rushing forward, snatched the weapon from their grasp. "Enough, enough," cried she; "long have you reigned, and your inclinations have been your only law. Now forbear; it is fit that my wishes should sometimes be listened to. Remember that I, too, am the daughter of the king."

To this Justice made answer, "Thou hast said well: we have reigned long: and long will we preserve our authority. But since there is this discord, call our brother, who is wise in all things; and let him judge between us."

The proposal was assented to. They showed him the grounds of their altercation, and explained how Justice and Truth pertinaciously demanded the infliction of the law, while Mercy sought a free forgiveness.

"My beloved sisters," said the prince,

"I am little satisfied with the flight of my sister Peace, whom your unbeseeming strife has banished. This ought not to be, and shall not. And as for my adulterous wife, I am prepared to undergo her punishment myself."

"If this be your determination," observed Justice, "we cannot oppose you, my brother."

Then turning towards Mercy, he said, "Use your endeavour to restore my wife. But should I receive her, and she again falls, do you design to renew your intercession?"

"Not," said the other, "unless she be truly penitent."

The prince then conducted back his sister Peace, and caused each of the others to embrace her, in turn. Concord being thus reëstablished, he hastened to his erring wife. She was received with every honour, and ended her days in peace.

IX.

THE KING'S DAUGHTER WHO WAS SWIFT-FOOTED

A CERTAIN king had an only daughter, remarkable for the beauty and dignity of her person. She was called Rosamond; and, at the early age of ten years, she proved so swift a runner, that she invariably attained the goal before her competitor. The king caused it to be proclaimed that whosoever should surpass his daughter in speed should marry her, and succeed to the throne: but in the event of a failure he should lose his head. And even with the heavy penalty before them, numbers permitted themselves to

be buoyed up by the hope of success to attempt, and to perish in the attempt.

But it happened that a poor man, called Abibas, inhabited that country, who thus communed with himself:

"I am very poor, and of a base extraction; if I may overcome this lady and marry her, not only shall I be promoted myself, but all who are of my blood."

But wiser than the rest, he took the three following precautions. First, he framed a curious garland of roses, of which he had ascertained that the lady was devotedly fond. Then, he procured a zone of the finest silk, from a conviction that most damsels were partial to this sort of clothing. And, lastly, he bought a silken bag, in which he deposited a golden ball bearing the following inscription: "Whosoever plays with me shall never satiate of play."

These three things he placed in his bosom, and knocked at the palace gate. The porter inquired his business; and he stated his wish in the usual form.

It happened that the princess herself

stood at a window close by, and heard Abibas express his intention to run with her. Observing that he was poor, and his attire threadbare and rent, she despised him from her very heart, and said, "Lo! what poor wretch is this with whom I have to contend?"

However, she prepared to run; and everything being in readiness, they commenced the race. Abibas would have been left at a considerable distance; but taking the garland of roses from its repository, he skilfully threw it down before her, on which the maiden stooped, picked it up, and placed it on her head. Delighted with the odour and beauty of the flowers, she paused to examine it; and Abibas took advantage of her forgetfulness and advanced rapidly toward the goal. This awoke her to a recollection of what was going forward, and crying aloud,

"Never shall the daughter of a prince be united to this miserable clown," she threw the garland from her into a deep well, and rushed onward like a whirlwind. In a few moments she overtook the

youth, and extending her hand, struck him upon the shoulder, exclaiming, "Stop, foolish thing; hopest thou to marry a princess?"

Just as she was on the point of repassing him, he drew forth the silken girdle, and cast it at her feet. The temptation again proved too strong for her resolution, and she stooped to gather it. Overjoyed at the beauty of its texture, she paused to bind it round her waist; and whilst she did this, Abibas had recovered more ground than he had lost. As soon as the fair racer perceived the consequences of her folly, she burst into a flood of tears, and rending the zone asunder, hurried on. Having again overtaken her adversary, she seized him by the arm, striking him smartly at the same time: "Fool, thou shalt not marry me;" and immediately she ran faster than before.

Abibas, when he saw this, waited until she was near the goal, and then threw at her feet the bag with the golden ball. It was impossible to forbear picking it up; and equally impossible not to open it and peep at its contents. She

did so; but reading the inscription, "Who plays with me shall never satiate of playing," she played so much and so long, that Abibas came first to the goal and married her.

X.

THE TALE OF TWO KNIGHTS

THE Emperor Maximian was renowned for the wisdom of his government. In his reign there lived two knights, the one wise and the other foolish, but who had a mutual regard for each other.

"Let us make an agreement," said the wise knight, "which will be advantageous to both."

The other assented, and, by the direction of his friend, proceeded to draw blood from his right arm. "I," said the latter, "will drink of thy blood, and thou of mine; so that neither in prosperity nor in adversity shall our covenant be broken, and whatsoever the one gains, shall be divided by the other."

The foolish knight agreed; and they ratified the treaty by a draught of each other's blood. After this they both dwelt in the same mansion. Now, the lord of the country had two cities, one of which was built on the summit of a lofty mountain. Since all who went to it would possess great wealth, and remain there for life, the path to this city was narrow and stony, and about midway three knights with a large army were stationed.

The custom was that whosoever passed should do battle, or lose his life, with everything that he possessed. In that city the emperor appointed a seneschal, who received without exception all who entered, and ministered to them according to their condition. But the other city was built in a valley under the mountain, the way to which was perfectly level and pleasant.

Three soldiers dwelt there, who cheerfully received whosoever came, and served them according to their pleasure. In this city also a seneschal was placed, but he ordered all who approached to be

thrown into prison, and on the coming of the judge to be condemned.

The wise knight said to his companion, "My friend, let us go through the world as other knights are wont to do, and seek our fortune."

His friend acquiesced; they set out upon their travels, and presently came to a place where two roads met.

"See," said the wise knight, "here are two roads. The one leads to the noblest city in the world, and if we go thither, we shall obtain whatsoever our hearts desire. But the other path conducts to a city which is built in a valley; if we venture there, we shall be thrown into prison, and afterwards crucified. I advise, therefore, that we avoid this road, and pursue the other."

"My friend," replied the foolish knight, "I heard long ago of these two cities; but the way to that upon the mountain is very narrow and dangerous, because of the soldiers who attack those that enter; nay, they frequently rob and murder them. But the other way is open and broad; and the soldiers who

are stationed there receive passengers with hospitality, and supply them with all things necessary. This is sufficiently manifest; I see it, and had rather believe my own eyes than you."

"It is true," returned his companion, "one way is difficult to walk along, but the other is infinitely worse at the end: ignominy and crucifixion will certainly be our doom. But fear you to walk the strait road, on account of a battle, or because of robbers? you, who are a soldier, and therefore in duty bound to fight valiantly! However, if you will go with me the way I desire, I promise to precede you in the attack; and be assured with your aid we shall overcome every obstacle."

"I protest to you," said the other, "I will not go your way, but will take mine own."

"Well," replied the wise knight, "since I have pledged you my word, and drank your blood in token of fidelity, I will proceed with you, though against my better judgment."

So they both went the same path.

The progress was extremely pleasant

till they reached the station of the three soldiers, who honourably and magnificently entertained them. And here the foolish knight said to the wise one, "Friend, did I not tell thee how comfortable this way would be found; in all which the other is deficient?"

"If the end be well," replied he, "all is well; but I do not hope it." With the three soldiers they tarried some time; insomuch that the seneschal of the city, hearing that two knights, contrary to royal prohibition, were approaching, sent out troops to apprehend them. The foolish knight he commanded to be bound hand and foot, and thrown into a pit, but the other he imprisoned. Now, when the judge arrived, the malefactors were all brought before him, and among the rest our two knights — the wiser of whom thus spoke:

"My Lord, I complain of my comrade, who is the occasion of my death. I declared to him the law of this city, and the danger to which we were exposed, but he would not listen to my words, nor abide by my counsels. 'I

will trust my eyes,' said he, 'rather than you.' Now, because I had taken an oath never to forsake him in prosperity or in adversity, I accompanied him hither. But ought I therefore to die? Pronounce a just judgment."

Then the foolish knight addressed the judge: "He is himself the cause of my death. For every one knows that he is reckoned wise, and I am naturally a fool. Ought he then so lightly to have surrendered his wisdom to my folly? And had he not done so, I should have returned to go the way which he went, even for the solemn oath which I had sworn. And therefore, since he is wise, and I am foolish, he is the occasion of my death."

The judge, hearing this, spoke to both, but to the wise knight first: "Thou who art wise, since thou didst listen so heedlessly to his folly and followedst him, and thou, foolish man, since thou didst not credit his word, but acted out thine own folly, ye shall both be suspended on the cross this very day." Thus it was done.

XI.

THE MAN WHO LOST HIS EYES IN VAIN

A CERTAIN king of Rome decreed that every blind man should annually receive a hundred shillings. It happened that twenty-three associates came into the city and entered a tavern to drink. They remained there seven days, both eating and drinking; but when they would reckon with the tavern-keeper, they had not sufficient money to defray the expense of what they had consumed. "Friends," quoth mine host, "here be wanting a hundred shillings. I tell you, of a certainty, ye go not hence till ye have paid the uttermost farthing." This rather startled the revellers, who, turning to one another, exclaimed,

"What shall we do? We cannot pay so large a sum."

At length one of them observed, "Listen to me; I will give you the best advice. The king of this country has decreed that whosoever is blind shall receive from his treasury one hundred shillings. Let us then cast lots, and upon whomsoever the lot falls, we will deprive him of sight, and send him to the king for the promised benevolence. Thus we shall depart in peace."

They all agreed that the counsel was excellent; and casting lots, the chance fell upon the contriver of the expedient; whose eyes they immediately put out. He was then led to the palace. Arriving at the gate, they knocked and were admitted by the porter, who inquired their business. The blind man answered, "I am one entitled, from my deficiency of sight, to the benefit of the royal donation."

"Well," said the porter, "I will inform the seneschal." He went accordingly; but the wary seneschal first determined to examine his exterior before he

delivered the money. He did so, and then asked what he wanted. "A hundred shillings," replied he, "which the law gives to every blind man."

"My friend," said the seneschal, "if I am not greatly mistaken, I saw you yesterday in a tavern with both eyes perfect. You misinterpret the law. It relates to those who, by some natural infirmity, or by accident, become blind — and against which there was no defence. Such the law protects and relieves. But you voluntarily surrendered your eyes; you drank away your money in a tavern, and planned this deceit. Seek, therefore, consolation and relief in the same place, for you shall not get a halfpenny here."

The blind man then retired in great confusion from the palace.

XII.

THE SUBTERRANEAN PALACE

THERE was an image in the city of Rome standing in an erect posture, with the dexter hand outstretched; and upon the middle finger was written, "STRIKE HERE." The image stood a long time in this manner, and no one understood what the inscription signified. It was much wondered at, and commented on;

but this was all, for they invariably departed as wise as they came.

At last, a certain subtle clerk, hearing of the image, felt anxious to see it; and when he had done so, he observed the superscription, "Strike here." He noticed that when the sun shone upon the image, the outstretched finger was discernible in the lengthened shadow. After a little consideration he took a spade, and where the shadow ceased, dug to the depth of about three feet. This brought him to a number of steps, which led into a subterranean cavity. Not a little exhilarated with his discovery, the clerk prosecuted the adventure. Descending the steps, he entered the hall of a magnificent palace, in which he perceived a king and a queen and many nobles seated at table, and the hall itself filled with men. They were all habited in costly apparel, and kept the most rigid silence. Looking about, he beheld in one corner of the place a polished stone, called a carbuncle, by the single aid of which the hall was lighted. In the opposite corner stood a man armed with

a bow and arrow, in the act of taking aim at the precious stone. Upon his brow was inscribed, "I am what I am: my shaft is inevitable; least of all can yon luminous carbuncle escape its stroke."

The clerk, amazed at what he saw, entered the bed-chamber, and found a multitude of beautiful women arrayed in purple garments, but not a sound escaped them. From thence he proceeded to the stables, and observed a number of horses and asses in their stalls. He touched them, but they were nothing but stone. He visited all the various buildings of the palace, and whatsoever his heart desired was to be found there. Returning to the hall, he thought of making good his retreat. "I have seen wonders to-day," said he to himself, "but nobody will credit the relation, unless I carry back with me some incontrovertible testimony."

Casting his eyes upon the highest table, he beheld a quantity of golden cups and beautiful knives, which he approached, and laid his hands upon one of each,

designing to carry them away. But no sooner had he placed them in his bosom, than the archer struck the carbuncle with the arrow, and shivered it into a thousand atoms. Instantly, the whole building was enveloped in thick darkness, and the clerk, in utter consternation, sought his way back. But being unable, in consequence of the darkness, to discover it, he perished in the greatest misery, amid the mysterious statues of the palace.

XIII.

THE TWO THIEVES

In the reign of a certain emperor, there were two thieves who bound themselves by an oath never to quit one another on any emergency, even though death were the alternative. They afterwards committed many depredations, and were, on some occasions, guilty of murder. It happened that one of them, being caught in some theft, was imprisoned and placed in fetters. His companion, understanding what had chanced, hastened to him, and said, "My friend, by the engagement which we have formed, I adjure you to tell me what I can do to serve you."

"It appears," answered the other, "that I must die, having been taken in

the fact for which I am sentenced. But I will show you how to oblige me. Obtain permission to remain in my place, while I hasten to arrange my affairs, and provide for my wife and children. Having done this, I will return in due time and liberate you."

"My friend," answered the first, "I will readily comply with your wishes."

He went therefore to the judge, and spoke thus: "My lord, my friend has been thrown into prison, and condemned to death. It seems that there is no chance for him; let it please you, then, to permit him to return home to arrange the affairs of his family, and I, in the mean time, will become his surety, and remain in prison."

"On such a day," replied the judge, "he, with some others, will be executed; if, upon that day, he return not before a certain hour, look you to it: your death is inevitable."

"My lord," answered the man, "I am prepared for the worst."

"Let him go, then: I consent to your wishes."

The judge ordered the substitute to be ironed, and placed in prison in the room of his friend, who immediately set out to his family. So long, however, did he postpone his return, that the day of execution arrived, and his pledge was unredeemed. The latter, therefore, was brought, with many others, to the seat of judgment.

"Where is your friend?" said the judge; "he has not arrived to make good his word."

"I hope the best, my lord," replied the other; "I do not think he will fail me."

Some time passed over, and still he came not; and the prisoner was at length conducted to the cross.

"You must attribute your death to yourself," said the judge; "do not charge it upon me. You have rashly trusted to your friend, and he has deceived you."

"My lord," replied he, "defer the crucifixion but for a moment, and suffer me to play upon an instrument three times before my death."

"Play!" exclaimed the judge; "of what nature is that playing?"

"I will shout, my lord."

"As you please."

Accordingly he began to vociferate. He shouted loudly once, twice, and at the third shout he distinguished, at some distance, a man running toward them with surprising velocity.

"My lord! my lord! there is a man coming; stay the execution — perhaps it is my friend, and I shall yet be liberated!"

The judge waited, and the person they looked for made his appearance.

"I am the man you expect," he exclaimed. "I have arranged my affairs, and meanwhile my friend has been in peril of death for me; let him now freely depart, for I am ready to suffer death for my crimes."

The judge regarded him for a few moments with attention, and then said, "My friend, tell me whence it comes that you are so faithful to one another?"

"My lord," he replied, "from our youth up we have been friends, and ever

pledged ourselves to be faithful. For this reason he put himself in my place till I settled my affairs."

"Well," said the judge, "because of this remarkable instance of fidelity, I pardon you. Remain with me, and I will provide all things necessary for your well-being."

They returned thanks to the judge, and promised equal fidelity to him. He then received them to favour; and all praised the judge who showed them this mercy.

XIV.

THE KNIGHT'S INJUSTICE

In the reign of the Emperor Maximian there were two knights, of whom one feared God and loved justice, while the other was covetous and rich, and more studious of pleasing the world than his Maker. Contiguous to this person's lands, the just knight had a piece of ground, which his avaricious neighbour ardently desired to possess. He offered large sums for it; but being denied, he was filled with vexation. It happened,

however, that the just knight died; on hearing which, the other forged an instrument purporting to be written by the deceased knight.

It stated that the land in question had been sold for a specified sum a short time previous to his death; and three men were hired to attest it. Having, by some means, obtained access to the dead knight, he introduced the witnesses; and finding his signet in the hall where he lay, took it, and, fixing it upon the thumb of the deceased, sealed the paper with the usual formalities.

"You are witnesses of this deed?" said he to the men who accompanied him.

"We are," answered they; and then making good their retreat, the knight seized upon the land. The son of the deceased complained grievously of this injustice.

"Why have you taken possession of my land?" asked he.

"It was sold to me by your father."

"Impossible," cried the other; "my father many times refused to sell it; and

that he afterwards did so, I will never believe."

They both went before the judge; and the covetous knight triumphantly produced the forged instrument, bearing the impression of the deceased's signet-ring, and brought forward the false witnesses to the sealing. After examining it, the son said, "I know that this is my father's signet, but I know also that he never disposed of the land. How you obtained the signet and these witnesses, I am ignorant."

The judge, after some deliberation, took each of the witnesses aside in turn; and separately examined them, together with the knight. He asked the eldest if he knew the Lord's Prayer, and made him repeat it from beginning to end. He did this accurately, and was then placed apart. When the second witness appeared, the judge said, "My friend, your companion has told me facts as true as the Lord's Prayer; therefore, unless you inform me what I demand, you shall instantly hang upon a cross."

The fellow, imagining that his comrade

had revealed the fraud, confessed how they had obtained the seal to the document. When the communication was made, he placed him apart; and sending for the third, spoke to him as to the other, and threatened him with the like penalty, unless he declared the fact. This man, therefore, corroborated his companion's account, and was then stationed by himself.

The old knight was then called; and the judge, putting on a stern aspect, spoke thus: "Wretched man! thy avarice hath blinded thee. Tell me how the deceased knight sold you the land."

The culprit, not divining that the truth had been discovered, boldly persevered in the account he had before given.

"Foolish man!" answered the judge, "thy own witnesses accuse thee. Didst thou not place the signet on the dead man's thumb, and sign the paper?"

When the knight found that his forgery was revealed, he fell prostrate upon the earth, and entreated mercy.

"Such mercy as thou meritest, thou

shalt have," said the judge: "bear them away, and drag them at the tails of horses to the cross, upon which let them be immediately suspended."

The noblemen of the kingdom applauded the sentence, not less than the ingenuity of the investigation. The property of the unjust knight was conferred upon the son of him whom he had wished to wrong; the young man gave thanks to the king, and possessed his inheritance in peace.

XV.

THE EMPEROR'S JUSTICE

THE Emperor Heraclius, amongst many other virtues, was remarkable for his inflexible justice. It happened that a certain man accused a knight of the murder of another knight, in this form:—"They two went out, in company with another, to war; but no battle was fought. He, however, returned without his companion; and, therefore, we believe that he murdered him."

The king appeared satisfied with the inference, and commanded the prisoner to be executed. But as they approached the place of execution, they beheld the lost knight advancing towards them, alive and well. The judge, enraged at this interruption of the sentence, said to the

accused, "I order you to be put to death, because you are already condemned." Then turning to the accuser, "And you also, because you are the cause of his death." "And you, too," addressing the restored knight — "because you were sent to kill a knight, and you did not."

XVI.

THE KNIGHT AND THE SERPENT

In the reign of the Emperor Fulgentius, a certain knight, named Zedechias, married a very beautiful but imprudent wife. In a certain chamber of their mansion a serpent dwelt. Now, the knight's vehement inclination for tournaments and jousting brought him to extreme poverty: he grieved immoderately, and, like one who was desperate, walked backward and forward, ignorant of what he should do. The serpent, beholding his misery, like the ass of Balaam, was

on that occasion miraculously gifted with a voice, and said to the knight, "Why do you lament? Take my advice, and you shall not repent it. Supply me every day with a certain quantity of sweet milk, and I will enrich you." This promise exhilarated the knight, and he faithfully followed the instructions of his subtle friend. The consequence was that he had a beautiful son, and became exceedingly wealthy. But it happened that his wife one day said to him,

"My lord, I am sure that serpent has great riches hidden in the chamber where he dwells. Let us kill him and get possession of the whole."

The advice pleased the knight, and at the request of his wife he took a hammer to destroy the serpent, and a vessel of milk. Allured by the milk, it put its head out of the hole, as it had been accustomed; and the knight lifted the hammer to strike it. The serpent, observing his perfidy, suddenly drew back its head; and the blow fell upon the vessel. No sooner had he done this, than his off-

spring died, and he lost everything that he formerly possessed. The wife, taught by their common loss, said to him, "Alas! I have ill counselled you; but go now to the hole of the serpent, and humbly acknowledge your offence. Peradventure you may find grace."

The knight complied, and standing before the dwelling-place of the serpent, shed many tears, and entreated that he might once more be made rich.

"I see," answered the serpent, "I see now that you are a fool, and will always be a fool. For how can I forget that blow of the hammer which you designed me, for which reason I slew your son and took away your wealth? There can be no real peace between us."

The knight, full of sorrow, replied thus: "I promise the most unshaken fidelity, and will never meditate the slightest injury, provided I may this once obtain your grace."

"My friend," said the serpent, "it is the nature of my species to be subtle and venomous. Let what I have said suffice. The blow offered at my head is fresh

upon my recollection; get you gone before you receive an injury."

The knight departed in great affliction, saying to his wife, "Fool that I was to take thy counsel!"

But ever afterwards they lived in the greatest indigence.

XVII.

THE KING'S FOREST

A CERTAIN powerful king planted a forest, and surrounded it with a wall. He stocked it with various animals, in which he took infinite pleasure. It happened that one being discovered meditating traitorous designs, his property was confiscated, and himself banished the land. This person, therefore, provided various kinds of dogs and nets, and went privately into the royal forest to take and destroy the animals which it contained. The names of his dogs were Richer, Emuleym, Hanegiff, Baudyn, Crismel, Egofyn, Beamis, and Renelen. By means of these dogs and the nets he destroyed every animal in the forest.

The king was greatly enraged at this

circumstance, and said to his son, "My dear son, arm yourself; call out the troops, and slay this traitor, or drive him from the kingdom." The youth answered, "I am ready to comply with your wishes; but as I have heard that he is a man of exceeding prowess, it would be advisable to conceal myself for a certain time, in company with a beautiful girl, whose wisdom surpasses that of all others. I will converse with her, and then prepare myself for battle."

The father replied, "Go to the castle Varioch; there you will find a girl of inimitable prudence. By her means, you may send a defiance to our enemy, and I will then promote her to many honours."

This heard, the son entered the castle secretly, and was received by the lady with great joy. He remained there some time, and then departed, armed with the power of his father, against the traitorous despoiler of the royal forest. In the end he overthrew him, cut off his head, and returned in triumph to the king's palace.

XVIII.

THE KING'S MELANCHOLY

A KING made a law, by which whosoever was suddenly to be put to death in the morning, before sunrise should be saluted with songs and trumpets, and, arrayed in black garments, should receive judgment. This king made a great feast, and convoked all the nobles of his kingdom, who appeared accordingly. The

most skilful musicians were assembled, and there was much sweet melody. But the sovereign was discontented and out of humour; his countenance expressed intense sorrow, and sighs and groans ascended from his heart. The courtiers were all amazed, but none had the hardihood to inquire the cause of his sadness.

At last they requested the king's brother to ask the cause of his sorrow; he made known to him the surprise of his guests, and entreated that he might understand the occasion of his grief.

"Go home now," answered the king; "to-morrow you shall know."

This was done. Early in the morning the king directed the trumpets to sound before his brother's house, and the guards to bring him to the court. The brother, greatly alarmed at the sounding of the trumpets, arose, and put on sable vesture. When he came before the king, the latter commanded a deep pit to be dug, and a rotten chair with four decayed feet to be slightly suspended over it. In this chair he made his brother sit; above

his head he caused a sword to hang, attached to a single silk thread; and four men, each armed with an extremely sharp sword, to stand near him, one before and one behind, a third on the right hand, and the fourth on the left. When they were thus placed, the king said, "The moment I give the word, strike him to the heart."

Trumpets and all other kind of musical instruments were brought, and a table, covered with various dishes, was set before him.

"My dear brother," said the king, "what is the occasion of your sorrow? Here are the greatest delicacies — the most enrapturing harmony; why do you not rejoice?"

"How can I rejoice?" answered he. "In the morning trumpets sounded for my death; and I am now placed upon a fragile chair: if I move ever so little it will fall to pieces, and I shall fall into the pit and never come out again. If I raise my head, the weapon above will penetrate to my brain. Besides this, the four torturers around stand ready to kill

me at your bidding. These things considered, were I lord of the universe, I could not rejoice."

"Now, then," answered the king, "I will reply to your question of yesterday. I am on my throne, as you on that frail chair. For my body is its emblem, supported by four decayed feet, that is, by the four elements. The pit below me is hell; above my head is the sword of divine justice, ready to take life from my body. Before me is the sword of death, which spares none, and comes when it is not expected; behind, a sword — that is, my sins, ready to accuse me at the tribunal of God. The weapon on the right hand is the devil; and that on the left is the worms which after death shall gnaw my body. And, considering all these circumstances, how can I rejoice? If you to-day feared me, who am mortal, how much more ought I to dread my Creator? Go, dearest brother, and be careful that you do not again ask such questions."

The brother rose from his unpleasant seat, and rendering thanks to the king

for his life, firmly resolved to amend himself. All who were present commended the ingenuity of the royal answer.

THE END.

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